This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

THE

WORKS

OF THE REVEREND

GEORGE WHITEFIELD, M.A.

Late of PEMBROKE-COLLEGE, OXFORD,
And Chaplain to the Rt. Hon. the Countess of HUNTINGDON.

CONTAINING

All his SERMONS and TRACTS
Which have been already published:

WITH

A SELECT COLLECTION of LETTERS,
Written to his most intimate Friends, and Persons of Distinction, in *England*, *Scotland*, *Ireland*, and *America*, from the Year 1734, to 1770, including the whole Period of his Ministry.

ALSO

Some other PIECES on IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,
never before printed; prepared by Himself for the Press.

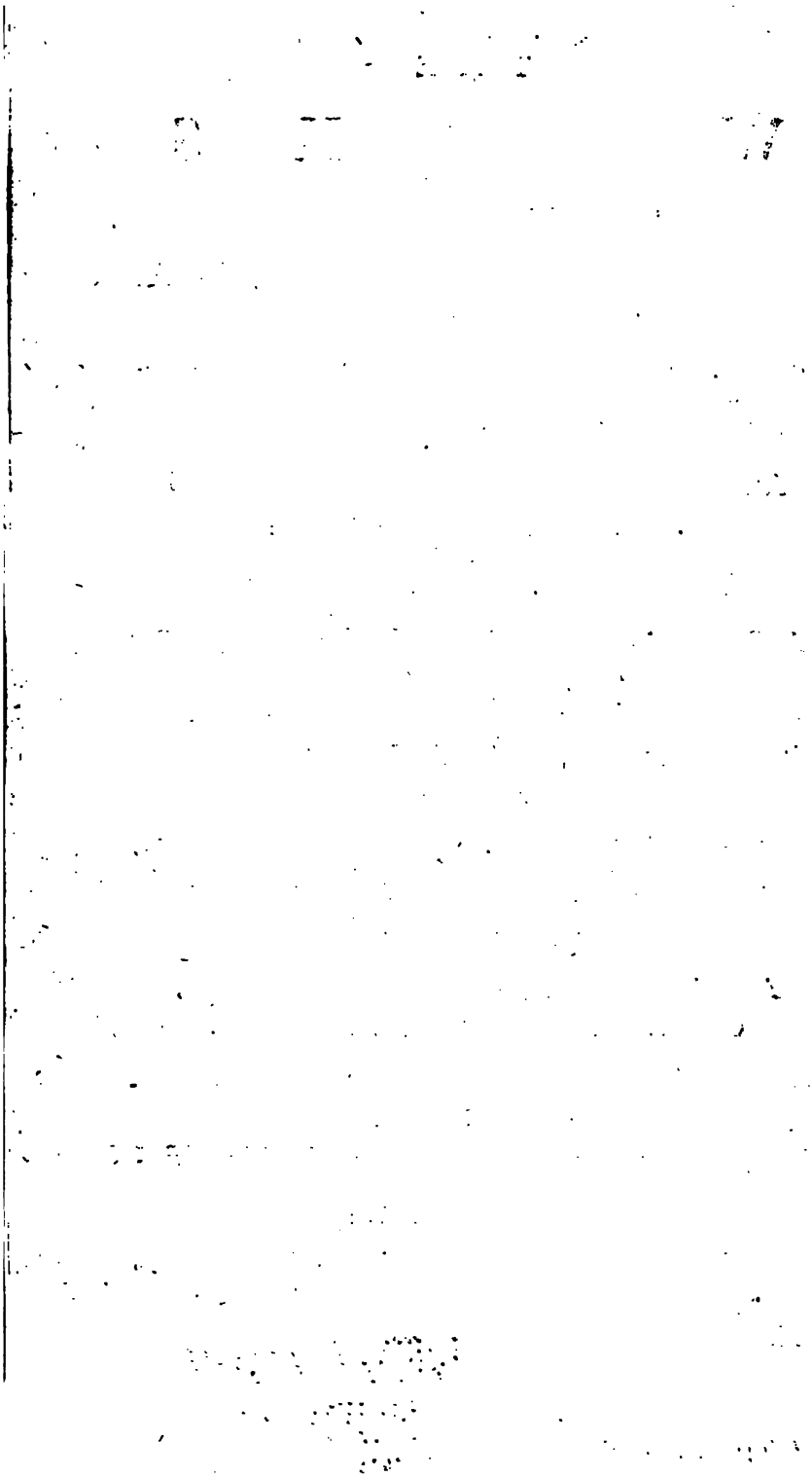
To which is prefixed,

An ACCOUNT of his LIFE,
Compiled from his Original PAPERS and LETTERS.

VOL. VI.

LONDON:
Printed for EDWARD and CHARLES DILLY, in the Poultry;
and Messrs. KINCAID and CREECH, at Edinburgh.
MDCCLXXII.

TOR LIBRARY
NEW-YORK.



CONTENTS*.

SERMON XXXII. A Penitent Heart, the beſt New Year's Gift.

LUKE xiii. 3. *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Page 3

SERM. XXXIII. The Goſpel Supper.

LUKE xiv. 22, 23, 24. *And the ſervant ſaid, Lord, it is done as thou haſt commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord ſaid unto the ſervant, Go out into the highways, and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my houſe may be filled. For I ſay unto you, that none of thoſe men which were bidden, ſhall taſte of my ſupper.* p. 20.

SERM. XXXIV. The Phariſee and Publican.

LUKE xviii. 14. *I tell you, this man went down to his houſe juſtified rather than the other: For every one that exalteth himſelf, ſhall be abaſed; and he that humbleth himſelf, ſhall be exalted.* p. 36

SERM. XXXV. The Converſion of Zaccheus.

LUKE xix. 9, 10. *And Jeſus ſaid unto him, This day is ſalvation come to this houſe; foraſmuch as he alſo is the Son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.* — — — p. 49

SERM. XXXVI. The Marriage of Cana.

JOHN ii. 11. *This beginning of miracles did Jeſus in Cana of Galilee, and manifeſted forth his glory; and his diſciples believed on him.* — — — p. 64

* The Sermons marked with a *, are now firſt publiſhed from the Author's own Manuſcripts.

SERM. XXXVII. The Duty of searching the Scriptures.

JOHN v. 39. *Search the Scriptures.* — — p. 79

SERM. XXXVIII. The Indwelling of the Spirit, the common Privilege of all Believers.

JOHN vii. 37, 38, 39. *In the laſt day, that great day of the feaſt, Jeſus ſtood and cried, ſaying, If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the ſcripture hath ſaid, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water. But this ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive.* — — — p. 89

SERM. XXXIX. The Reſurrection of Lazarus.

JOHN xi. 43, 44. *And when he had thus ſpoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth. And he that was dead, came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-cloaths: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jeſus ſaith unto them, Looſe him, and let him go.* — — p. 103

SERM. XL. The Holy Spirit convincing the World of Sin, Righteouſneſs, and Judgment.

JOHN xvi. 8. *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin, and of righteouſneſs, and of judgment.* p. 127

SERM. XLI. Saul's Converſion.

ACTS ix. 22. *But Saul increaſed the more in ſtrength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damaſcus, proving that this is very Chriſt.* — — — p. 143

SERM. XLII. Marks of having received the Holy Ghoſt.

ACTS xix. 2. *Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed?* — — — p. 161

SERM. XLIII. The Almoſt Chriſtian.

ACTS xxvi. 28. *Almoſt thou perſuadeſt me to be a chriſtian.* p. 174

SERM.

SERM. XLIV. Chriſt, the Believer's Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption.

1 Cor. i. 30. *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption.* — — — p. 187

SERM. XLV. The Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt the beſt Knowledge.

1 Cor. ii. 2. *I determined not to know any thing among you, ſave Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified.* — p. 203

SERM. XLVI. Of Juſtification by Chriſt.

1 Cor. vi. 11. *But ye are juſtified.* The whole verſe is: *And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and by the Spirit of our God.* — — p. 214

SERM. XLVII. The great Duty of Charity recommended.

1 Cor. xiii. 8. *Charity never faileth.* — p. 227

SERM. XLVIII. Satan's Devices.

1 Cor. ii. 11. *Leſt Satan ſhould get an advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.* — p. 241

SERM. XLIX. On Regeneration.

2 Cor. v. 17. *If any man be in Chriſt, he is a new creature.* p. 257

SERM. L. Chriſtians, Temples of the living God.

2 Cor. vi. 16. *Ye are the Temple of the living God.* p. 273

SERM. LI. Chriſt the only Preſervative againſt a Reprobate Spirit.

2 Cor. xiii. 5. *Know ye not your ownſelves, how that Jeſus Chriſt is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* — p. 287

SERM. LII. The heinous Sin of Drunkenneſs.

Ephesians v. 18. *Be not drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs; but be filled with the Spirit.* — — p. 303

SERM.

SERM. LIII. The Power of Chriſt's Reſurrection.

PHILIP. iii. 10. *That I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection.* — — — p. 317

SERM. LIV. Interceſſion every Chriſtian's Duty.

1 THESS. v. 25. *Brethren, pray for us.* — — p. 331

SERM. LV. Perſecution every Chriſtian's Lot.

2 TIM. iii. 12. *Yea, and all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall ſuffer perſecution.* — — p. 345

SERM. LVI. An Exhortation to the People of God not to be diſcouraged in their Way, by the Scoffs and Contempt of wicked Men.

HEBREWS iv. 9. *There remaineth therefore a reſt to the people of God.* — — — p. 361

*SERM. LVII. Preached before the Governor, and Council, and the Houſe of Aſſembly, in Georgia, on January 28, 1770.

ZECH. iv. 10. *For who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things?* p. 369

SERMON

SERMON XXXII.

A Penitent Heart, the beſt *New Year's Gift.*

LUKE xiii. 3.

Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.

WHEN we conſider how heinous and aggravating our offences are, in the ſight of a juſt and holy GOD, that they bring down his wrath upon our heads, and occaſion us to live under his indignation; how ought we thereby to be deterred from evil, or at leaſt engaged to ſtudy to repent thereof, and not commit the ſame again; but man is ſo thoughtleſs of an eternal ſtate, and has ſo little conſideration of the welfare of his immortal ſoul, that he can ſin without any thought that he muſt give an account of his actions at the day of judgment; or if he, at times, has any reflections on his behaviour, they do not drive him to true repentance: he may, for a ſhort time, refrain from falling into ſome groſs ſins which he had lately committed; but then, when the temptation comes again with power, he is carried away with the luſt; and thus he goes on promiſing and reſolving, and in breaking both his reſolutions and his promiſes, as faſt almoſt as he has made them. This is highly offenſive to GOD, it is mocking of him. My brethren, when grace is given us to repent truly, we ſhall turn wholly unto GOD; and let me beſeech you to repent of your ſins, for the time is haſtening when you will have neither time nor call to repent; there is none in the grave, whither we are going; but do not be afraid, for GOD often receives the greateſt ſinner to mercy through the merits of CHRIST JESUS; this magnifies the riches of his free grace; and ſhould be an encouragement for you, who are great and notorious ſinners, to repent, for he will have mercy upon you, if you through CHRIST return unto him.

St. *Paul* was an eminent inſtance of this; he ſpeaks of himſelf as "the chief of ſinners," and he declareth how GOD ſhewed mercy unto him. CHRIST loves to ſhew mercy unto ſinners, and if you repent, he will have mercy upon you. But as no word is more miſtaken than that of repentance, I ſhall

I. Shew you what the nature of repentance is,

II. Conſider the ſeveral parts and cauſes of repentance,

III. I ſhall give you ſome reaſons, why repentance is neceſſary to ſalvation. And

IV. Exhort all of you, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, to endeavour after repentance.

I. Repentance, my brethren, in the firſt place, as to its nature, is the carnal and corrupt diſpoſition of men being changed into a renewed and ſanctified diſpoſition. A man that has truly repented, is truly regenerated: it is a different word for one and the ſame thing; the motley mixture of the beaſt and devil is gone; there is, as it were, a new creation wrought in your hearts. If your repentance is true, you are renewed throughout, both in ſoul and body; your underſtandings are enlightened with the knowledge of GOD, and of the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and your wills, which were ſtubborn, obſtinate, and hated all good, are obedient and conformable to the will of GOD. Indeed, our deiſts tell us, that man now has a free will to do good, to love GOD, and to repent when he will; but indeed, there is no free will in any of you, but to ſin; nay, your free-will leads you ſo far, that you would, if poſſible, pull GOD from his throne. This may, perhaps, offend the Phariſees; but (it is the truth in CHRIST which I ſpeak, I lie not) every man by his own natural will hates GOD; but when he is turned unto the LORD, by evangelical repentance, then his will is changed; then your conſciences, now hardened and benumbed, ſhall be quickened and awakened; then your hard hearts ſhall be melted, and your unruly affections ſhall be crucified. Thus, by that repentance, the whole ſoul will be changed, you will have new inclinations, new deſires, and new habits.

You

You may ſee how vile we are by nature, that it requires ſo great a change to be made upon us, to recover us from this ſtate of ſin, and therefore the conſideration of our dreadful ſtate ſhould make us earneſt with GOD to change our condition, and that change, true repentance implies; therefore, my brethren, conſider how hateful your ways are to GOD, while you continue in ſin; how abominable you are unto him, while you run into evil: you cannot be ſaid to be chriſtians while you are hating CHRIST, and his people; true repentance will entirely change you, the biaſs of your ſouls will be changed, then you will delight in GOD, in CHRIST, in his law, and in his people; you will then believe that there is ſuch a thing as inward feeling, though now you may eſteem it madneſs and enthuſiaſm; you will not then be aſhamed of becoming fools for CHRIST's ſake; you will not regard being ſcoffed at; it is not then their pointing after you and crying, "Here comes "another troop of his followers," will diſmay you; no, your ſoul will abhor ſuch proceedings, the ways of CHRIST and his people will be your whole delight.

It is the nature of ſuch repentance to make a change, and the greateſt change as can be made here in the ſoul. Thus you ſee what repentance implies in its own nature; it denotes an abhorrence of all evil, and a forſaking of it. I ſhall now proceed

Secondly, To ſhew you the parts of it, and the cauſes concurring thereto.

The parts are, ſorrow, hatred, and an entire forſaking of ſin.

Our ſorrow and grief for ſin, muſt not ſpring merely from a fear of wrath; for if we have no other ground but that, it proceeds from ſelf-love, and not from any love to GOD; and if love to GOD is not the chief motive of your repentance, your repentance is in vain, and not to be eſteemed true.

Many, in our days, think their crying, GOD forgive me! or, LORD have mercy upon me! or, I am ſorry for it! is repentance, and that GOD will eſteem it as ſuch; but, indeed, they are miſtaken; it is not the drawing near to GOD with our lips, while our hearts are far from him, which he regards. Repentance does not come by fits and ſtarts; no, it is one

continued act of our lives; for as we daily commit ſin, ſo we need a daily repentance before GOD, to obtain forgiveneſs for thoſe ſins we commit.

It is not your confeſſing yourſelves to be ſinners, it is not knowing your condition to be ſad and deplorable, ſo long as you continue in your ſins; your care and endeavours ſhould be, to get the heart thoroughly affected therewith, that you may feel yourſelves to be loſt and undone creatures, for CHRIST came to ſave ſuch as are loſt; and if you are enabled to groan under the weight and burden of your ſins, then CHRIST will eaſe you and give you reſt.

And till you are thus ſenſible of your miſery and loſt condition, you are a ſervant to ſin and to your luſts, under the bondage and command of Satan, doing his drudgery: thou art under the curſe of GOD, and liable to his judgment. Conſider how dreadful thy ſtate will be at death, and after the day of judgment, when thou wilt be expoſed to ſuch miſeries which the ear hath not heard, neither can the heart conceive, and that to all eternity, if you die impenitent.

But I hope better things of you, my brethren, though I thus ſpeak, and things which accompany ſalvation; go to GOD in prayer, and be earneſt with him, that by his Spirit he would convince you of your miſerable condition by nature, and make you truly ſenſible thereof. O be humbled, be humbled, I beſeech you, for your ſins. Having ſpent ſo many years in ſinning, what canſt thou do leſs, than be concerned to ſpend ſome hours in mourning and ſorrowing for the ſame, and be humbled before GOD.

Look back into your lives, call to mind thy ſins, as many as poſſible thou canſt, the ſins of thy youth, as well as of thy riper years; ſee how you have departed from a gracious Father, and wandered in the way of wickedneſs, in which you have loſt yourſelves, the favour of GOD, the comforts of his Spirit, and the peace of your own conſciences; then go and beg pardon of the LORD, through the blood of the Lamb, for the evil thou haſt committed, and for the good thou haſt omitted. Conſider, likewiſe, the heinouſneſs of thy ſins; ſee what very aggravating circumſtances thy ſins are attended with, how you have abuſed the patience of GOD, which ſhould have led you to repentance; and when thou findeſt thy heart hard, beg of

GOD

God to ſoften it, cry mightily unto him, and he will take away thy ſtony heart, and give thee a heart of fleſh.

Reſolve to leave all thy ſinful luſts and pleaſures; renounce, forſake, and abhor thy old ſinful courſe of life, and ſerve God in holineſs and righteouſneſs all the remaining part of life. If you lament and bewail paſt ſins, and do not forſake them, your repentance is in vain, you are mocking of God, and deceiving your own ſoul; you muſt put off the old man with his deeds, before you can put on the new man, Christ Jesus.

You, therefore, who have been ſwearers and curſers, you, who have been harlots and drunkards, you, who have been thieves and robbers, you, who have hitherto followed the ſinful pleaſures and diverſions of life, let me beſeech you, by the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, that you would no longer continue therein, but that you would forſake your evil ways, and turn unto the Lord, for he waiteth to be gracious unto you, he is ready, he is willing to pardon you of all your ſins; but do not expect Christ to pardon you of ſin, when you run into it, and will not abſtain from complying with the temptations; but if you will be perſuaded to abſtain from evil and chuſe the good, to return unto the Lord, and repent of your wickedneſs, he hath promiſed he will abundantly pardon you, he will heal your back-ſlidings, and will love you freely. Reſolve now this day to have done with your ſins for ever; let your old ways and you be ſeparated; you muſt reſolve againſt it, for there can be no true repentance without a reſolution to forſake it. Reſolve for Christ, reſolve againſt the devil and his works, and go on fighting the Lord's battles againſt the devil and his emiſſaries; attack him in the ſtrongeſt holds he has, fight him as men, as chriſtians, and you will ſoon find him to be a coward; reſiſt him and he will fly from you. Reſolve, through grace, to do this, and your repentance is half done; but then take care that you do not ground your reſolutions on your own ſtrength, but in the ſtrength of the Lord Jesus Christ; he is the way, he is the truth, and he is the life; without his aſſiſtance you can do nothing, but through his grace ſtrengthening thee, thou wilt be enabled to do all things; and the more thou art ſenſible of thy own weakneſs and inability, the more ready Christ will be to help thee; and what can all the men of the world do to thee when

CHRIST is for thee? thou wilt not regard what they ſay againſt thee, for you will have the teſtimony of a good conſcience.

Reſolve to caſt thyſelf at the feet of CHRIST in ſubjection to him, and throw thyſelf into the arms of CHRIST for ſalvation by him. Conſider, my dear brethren, the many invitations he has given you to come unto him, to be ſaved by him; "GOD has laid on him the iniquity of us all." O let me prevail with you, above all things, to make choice of the LORD JESUS CHRIST; reſign yourſelves unto him, take him, O take him, upon his own terms, and whoſoever thou art, how great a ſinner ſoever you have been, this evening, in the name of the great GOD, do I offer JESUS CHRIST unto thee; as thou valueſt thy life and ſoul refuſe him not, but ſtir up thyſelf to accept of the LORD JESUS, take him wholly as he is, for he will be applied wholly unto you, or elſe not at all. JESUS CHRIST muſt be your whole wiſdom, JESUS CHRIST muſt be your whole righteouſneſs, JESUS CHRIST muſt be your whole ſanctification, or he will never be your eternal redemption.

What though you have been ever ſo wicked and profligate, yet, if you will now abandon your ſins, and turn unto the LORD JESUS CHRIST, thou ſhalt have him given to thee, and all thy ſins ſhall be freely forgiven. O why will you neglect the great work of your repentance? do not defer the doing of it one day longer, but to-day, even now, take that CHRIST who is freely offered to you.

Now as to the *cauſes* hereof, the firſt cauſe is GOD; he is the author, "we are born of GOD," GOD hath begotten us, even GOD, the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; it is he that ſtirs us up to will and to do of his own good pleaſure: and another cauſe is, GOD's free grace; it is owing to the "riches of his free grace," my brethren, that we have been prevented from going down to hell long ago; it is becauſe the compaſſions of the LORD fail not, they are new every morning, and freſh every evening.

Sometimes the inſtruments are very unlikely: a poor deſpiſed miniſter, or member of JESUS CHRIST, may, by the power of GOD, be made an inſtrument in the hands of GOD, of bringing you to true evangelical repentance; and this may be done to ſhew, that the power is not in men, but that it is entirely owing to the good pleaſure of GOD; and if there

has

has been any good done among many of you, by preaching the word, as I truſt there has, though it was preached in a field, if GOD has met and owned us, and bleſſed his word, though preached by an enthuſiaſtic babbler, a boy, a madman; I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice, let foes ſay what they will. I ſhall now

Thirdly, Shew the reaſons why repentance is neceſſary to ſalvation.

And this, my brethren, is plainly revealed to us in the word of GOD, "The ſoul that does not repent and turn unto the LORD, ſhall die in its ſins, and their blood ſhall be required at their own heads." It is neceſſary, as we have ſinned, we ſhould repent; for a holy GOD could not, nor ever can, or will, admit any thing that is unholy into his preſence: this is the beginning of grace in the ſoul; there muſt be a change in heart and life, before there can be a dwelling with a holy GOD. You cannot love ſin and GOD too, you cannot love GOD and mammon; no unclean perſon can ſtand in the preſence of GOD, it is contrary to the holineſs of his nature; there is a contrariety between the holy nature of GOD, and the unholy nature of carnal and unregenerate men.

What communication can there be between a ſinleſs GOD, and creatures full of ſin, between a pure GOD and impure creatures? If you were to be admitted into heaven with your preſent tempers, in your impenitent condition, heaven itſelf would be a hell to you; the ſongs of angels would be as enthuſiaſm, and would be intolerable to you; therefore you muſt have theſe tempers changed, you muſt be holy, as GOD is: he muſt be your GOD here, and you muſt be his people, or you will never dwell together to all eternity. If you hate the ways of GOD, and cannot ſpend an hour in his ſervice, how will you think to be eaſy, to all eternity, in ſinging praiſes to him that ſits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever.

And this is to be the employment, my brethren, of all thoſe who are admitted into this glorious place, where neither ſin nor ſinner is admitted, where no ſcoffer ever can come, without repentance from his evil ways, a turning unto GOD, and a cleaving unto him: this muſt be done, before any can be admitted into the glorious manſions of GOD, which are

prepared for all that love the LORD JESUS CHRIST in ſincerity and truth: repent ye then of all your ſins. O my dear brethren, it makes my blood run cold, in thinking that any of you ſhould not be admitted into the glorious manſions above. O that it was in my power, I would place all of you, yea, you my ſcoffing brethren, and the greateſt enemy I have on earth, at the right-hand of JESUS; but this I cannot do: however, I adviſe and exhort you, with all love and tenderneſs, to make JESUS your refuge; fly to him for relief; JESUS died to ſave ſuch as you; he is full of compaſſion; and if you go to him, as poor, loſt, undone ſinners, JESUS will give you his ſpirit; you ſhall live and reign, and reign and live, you ſhall love and live, and live and love with this JESUS to all eternity.

I am, *Fourthly*, to exhort all of you, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, to repent of all your ſins, and turn unto the LORD.

And I ſhall ſpeak to each of you; for you have either repented, or you have not, you are believers in CHRIST JESUS, or unbelievers.

And firſt, you who never have truly repented of your ſins, and never have truly forſaken your luſts, be not offended if I ſpeak plain to you; for it is love, love to your ſouls, that conſtrains me to ſpeak: I ſhall lay before you your danger, and the miſery to which you are expoſed, while you remain impenitent in ſin. And O that this may be a means of making you fly to CHRIST for pardon and forgiveneſs.

While thy ſins are not repented of, thou art in danger of death, and if you ſhould die, you would periſh for ever. There is no hope of any who live and die in their ſins, but that they will dwell with devils and damned ſpirits to all eternity. And how do we know we ſhall live much longer: we are not ſure of ſeeing our own habitations this night in ſafety. What mean ye then being at eaſe and pleaſure while your ſins are not pardoned. As ſure as ever the word of GOD is true, if you die in that condition, you are ſhut out of all hope and mercy for ever, and ſhall paſs into eaſeleſs and endleſs miſery.

What is all thy pleaſures and diverſions worth? They laſt but for a moment, they are of no worth, and but of ſhort continuance. And ſure it muſt be groſs folly, eagerly to purſue

thoſe

thoſe ſinful luſts and pleaſures, which war againſt the ſoul, which tend to harden the heart, and keep us from cloſing with the LORD JESUS; indeed, theſe are deſtructive of our peace here, and without repentance, will be of our peace hereafter.

O the folly and madneſs of this ſenſual world; ſure if there were nothing in ſin but preſent ſlavery, it would keep an ingenuous ſpirit from it. But to do the devils drudgery! and if we do that, we ſhall have his wages, which is eternal death and condemnation; O conſider this, my guilty brethren, you that think it no crime to ſwear, whore, drink, or ſcoff and jeer at the people of GOD; conſider how your voices will then be changed, and you that counted their lives madneſs, and their end without honour, ſhall howl and lament at your own madneſs and folly, that ſhould bring you to ſo much woe and diſtreſs. Then you will lament and bemoan your own dreadful condition; but it will be of no ſignification: for he that is now your merciful Saviour, will then become your inexorable Judge. Now he is eaſy to be entreated; but then, all your tears and prayers will be in vain: for GOD hath allotted to every man a day of grace, a time of repentance, which if he doth not improve, but neglects and deſpiſes the means which are offered to him, he cannot be ſaved.

Conſider, therefore, while you are going on in a courſe of ſin and unrighteouſneſs, I beſeech you, my brethren, to think of the conſequence that will attend your thus miſpending your precious time; your ſouls are worth being concerned about: for if you can enjoy all the pleaſures and diverſions of life, at death you muſt leave them; that will put an end to all your worldly concerns. And will it not be very deplorable, to have your good things here, all your earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh pleaſures, which you have been ſo much taken up with, all over: and the thought for how trifling a concern thou haſt loſt eternal welfare, will gnaw thy very ſoul.

Thy wealth and grandeur will ſtand in no ſtead: thou canſt carry nothing of it into the other world: then the conſideration of thy uncharitableneſs to the poor, and the ways thou didſt take to obtain thy wealth, will be a very hell unto thee.

Now

Now you enjoy the means of grace, as the preaching of his word, prayer, and ſacraments; and GOD has ſent his miniſters out into the fields and highways, to invite, to woo you to come in; but they are tireſome to thee, thou hadſt rather be at thy pleaſures: ere long, my brethren, they will be over, and you will be no more troubled with them; but then thou wouldſt give ten thouſand worlds for one moment of that merciful time of grace which thou haſt abuſed; then you will cry for a drop of that precious blood which now you trample under your feet; then you will wiſh for one more offer of mercy, for CHRIST and his free grace to be offered to you again; but your crying will be in vain: for as you would not repent here, GOD will not give you an opportunity to repent hereafter: if you would not in CHRIST's time, you ſhall not in your own. In what a dreadful condition will you then be? What horror and aſtoniſhment will poſſeſs your ſouls? Then all thy lies and oaths, thy ſcoffs and jeers at the people of GOD, all thy filthy and unclean thoughts and actions, thy miſpent time in balls, plays, and aſſemblies, thy ſpending whole evenings at cards, dice, and maſquerades, thy frequenting of taverns and alehouſes, thy worldlineſs, covetouſneſs, and thy uncharitableneſs, will be brought at once to thy remembrance, and at once charged upon thy guilty ſoul. And how can you bear the thoughts of theſe things? Indeed I am full of compaſſion towards you, to think that this ſhould be the portion of any who now hear me. Theſe are truths, though awful ones; my brethren, theſe are the truths of the goſpel; and if there was not a neceſſity for thus ſpeaking, I would willingly forbear: for it is no pleaſing ſubject to me, any more than it is to you; but it is my duty to ſhew you the dreadful conſequences of continuing in ſin. I am only now acting the part of a ſkilful ſurgeon, that ſearches a wound before he heals it: I would ſhew you your danger firſt, that deliverance may be the more readily accepted by you.

Conſider, that however you may be for putting the evil day away from you, and are now ſtriving to hide your ſins, at the day of judgment there ſhall be a full diſcovery of all; hidden things on that day ſhall be brought to light; and after all thy ſins have been revealed to the whole world, then you muſt

depart

depart into everlaſting fire in hell, which will not be quenched night and day; it will be without intermiſſion, without end. O then, what ſtupidity and ſenſeleſsneſs hath poſſeſſed your hearts, that you are not frighted from your ſins. The fear of *Nebuchadnezzar*'s fiery furnace, made men do any thing to avoid it; and ſhall not an everlaſting fire make men, make you, do any thing to avoid it?

O that this would awaken and cauſe you to humble yourſelves for your ſins, and to beg pardon for them, that you might find mercy in the LORD.

Do not go away, let not the devil hurry you away before the ſermon is over; but ſtay, and you ſhall have a JESUS offered to you, who has made full ſatisfaction for all your ſins.

Let me beſeech you to caſt away your tranſgreſſions, to ſtrive againſt ſin, to watch againſt it, and to beg power and ſtrength from CHRIST, to keep down the power of thoſe luſts that hurry you on in your ſinful ways.

But if you will not do any of theſe things, if you are reſolved to ſin on, you muſt expect eternal death to be the conſequence; you muſt expect to be ſeized with horror and trembling, with horror and amazement, to hear the dreadful ſentence of condemnation pronounced againſt you: and then you will run and call upon the mountains to fall on you, to hide you from the LORD, and from the fierce anger of his wrath.

Had you now a heart to turn from your ſins unto the living GOD, by true and unfeigned repentance, and to pray unto him for mercy, in and through the merits of JESUS CHRIST, there were hope; but at the day of judgment, thy prayers and tears will be of no ſignification; they will be of no ſervice to thee, the Judge will not be entreated by thee: as you would not hearken to him when he called unto thee, but deſpiſed both him and his miniſters, and would not leave your iniquities; therefore, on that day he will not be entreated, notwithſtanding all thy cries and tears; for GOD himſelf hath ſaid, "Becauſe I have called, and you refuſed; I have ſtretched out my hand, and no man regarded, but ye have ſet at nought all my counſel, and would have none of my reproof; I will alſo laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruction cometh

as

as a whirlwind; when diſtreſs and anguiſh cometh upon you, then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me."

Now you may call this enthuſiaſm and madneſs; but at that great day, if you repent not of your ſins here, you will find, by woeful experience, that your own ways were madneſs indeed; but God forbid it ſhould be left undone till then: ſeek after the LORD while he is to be found; call upon him while he is near, and you ſhall find mercy: repent this hour, and CHRIST will joyfully receive you.

What ſay you? Muſt I go to my Maſter, and tell him you will not come unto him, and will have none of his counſels? No; do not ſend me on ſo unhappy an errand: I cannot, I will not tell him any ſuch thing. Shall not I rather tell him, you are willing to repent and to be converted, to become new men, and take up a new courſe of life: this is the only wiſe reſolution you can make. Let me tell my Maſter, that you will come unto, and will wait upon him: for if you do not, it will be your ruin in time, and to eternity.

You will at death wiſh you had lived the life of the righteous, that you might have died his death. Be adviſed then; conſider what is before you, CHRIST and the world, holineſs and ſin, life and death: chooſe now for yourſelves; let your choice be made immediately, and let that choice be your dying choice.

If you would not chuſe to die in your ſins, to die drunkards, to die adulterers, to die ſwearers and ſcoffers, &c. live not out this night in the dreadful condition you are in. Some of you, it may be, may ſay, You have not power, you have no ſtrength: but have not you been wanting to yourſelves in ſuch things that were within your power? Have you not as much power to go to hear a ſermon, as to go into a playhouſe, or to a ball, or maſquerade? You have as much power to read the Bible, as to read plays, novels, and romances; and you can aſſociate as well with the godly, as with the wicked and prophane: this is but an idle excuſe, my brethren, to go on in your ſins: and if you will be found in the means of grace, CHRIST hath promiſed he will give you ſtrength. While *Peter* was preaching, the Holy Ghoſt fell on all that heard the word: how then ſhould you be found in the way of your duty?

JESUS CHRIST will then give thee ſtrength; he will put his Spirit within thee; thou ſhalt find he will be thy wiſdom, thy righteouſneſs, thy ſanctification, and thy redemption. Do but try what a gracious, a kind, and loving Maſter he is; he will be a help to thee in all thy burdens: and if the burden of ſin is on thy ſoul, go to him as weary and heavy laden, and thou ſhalt find reſt.

Do not ſay, that your ſins are too many and too great to expect to find mercy: No; be they ever ſo many, or ever ſo great, the blood of the LORD JESUS CHRIST will cleanſe you from all ſins. GOD's grace, my brethren, is free, rich, and ſovereign. *Manaſſah* was a great ſinner, and yet he was pardoned; *Zaccheus* was gone far from GOD, and went out to ſee CHRIST, with no other view but to ſatisfy his curioſity; and yet JESUS met him, and brought ſalvation to his houſe. *Manaſſah* was an idolater and murderer, yet he received mercy; the other was an oppreſſor and extortioner, who had gotten riches by fraud and deceit, and by grinding the faces of the poor: ſo did *Matthew* too, and yet they found mercy.'

Have you been blaſphemers and perſecutors of the ſaints and ſervants of GOD? So was St. *Paul*, yet he received mercy: Have you been common harlots, filthy and unclean perſons? ſo was *Mary Magdalene*, and yet ſhe received mercy! Haſt thou been a thief? the thief upon the croſs found mercy. I deſpair of none of you, however vile and profligate you have been; I ſay, I deſpair of none of you, eſpecially when GOD has had mercy on ſuch a wretch as I am.

Remember the poor Publican, how he found favour with GOD, when the proud, ſelf-conceited Phariſee, who, puffed up with his own righteouſneſs, was rejected. And if you will go to JESUS, as the poor Publican did, under a ſenſe of your own unworthineſs, you ſhall find favour as he did: there is virtue enough in the blood of JESUS, to pardon greater ſinners than he has yet pardoned. Then be not diſcouraged, but come unto JESUS, and you will find him ready to help in all thy diſtreſſes, to lead thee into all truth, to bring thee from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD.

Do not let the devil deceive you, by telling you, that then all your delights and pleaſures will be over: No; this is ſo far from depriving you of all pleaſure, that it is an inlet unto

unſpeakable

unſpeakable delights, peculiar to all who are truly regenerated. The new birth is the very beginning of a life of peace and comfort; and the greateſt pleaſantneſs is to be found in the ways of holineſs.

Solomon, who had experience of all other pleaſures, yet ſaith of the ways of godlineſs, "That all her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are paths of peace." Then ſure you will not let the devil deceive you; it is all he wants, it is that he aims at, to make religion appear to be melancholy, miſerable, and enthuſiaſtic: but let him ſay what he will, give not ear to him, regard him not, for he always was and will be a liar.

What words, what entreaties ſhall I uſe, to make you come unto the LORD JESUS CHRIST? The little love I have experienced ſince I have been brought from ſin to GOD, is ſo great, that I would not be in a natural ſtate for ten thouſand worlds; and what I have felt is but little to what I hope to feel; but that little love which I have experienced, is a ſufficient buoy againſt all the ſtorms and tempeſts of this boiſterous world: and let men and devils do their worſt, I rejoice in the LORD JESUS, yea, and I will rejoice.

And O if you repent and come to JESUS, I would rejoice on your accounts too; and we ſhould rejoice together to all eternity, when once paſſed on the other ſide of the grave. O come to JESUS. The arms of JESUS CHRIST will embrace you; he will waſh away all your ſins in his blood, and will love you freely.

Come, I beſeech you to come unto JESUS CHRIST. O that my words would pierce to the very ſoul! O that JESUS CHRIST was formed in you! O that you would turn to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, that he might have mercy upon you!

I would ſpeak till midnight, yea, I would ſpeak till I could ſpeak no more, ſo it might be a means to bring you to JESUS: let the LORD JESUS but enter your ſouls, and you ſhall find peace which the world can neither give nor take away. There is mercy for the greateſt ſinner amongſt you; go unto the LORD as ſinners, helpleſs and undone without it, and then you ſhall find comfort in your ſouls, and be admitted at laſt amongſt thoſe who ſing praiſes unto the LORD to all eternity.

Now,

Now, my brethren, let me ſpeak a word of exhortation to thoſe of you, who are already brought to the LORD JESUS, who are born again, who do belong to GOD, to whom it has been given to repent of your ſins, and are cleanſed from their guilt; and that is, be thankful to GOD for his mercies towards you. O admire the grace of GOD, and bleſs his name for ever! Are you made alive in CHRIST JESUS? Is the life of GOD begun in your ſouls, and have you the evidence thereof? Be thankful for this unſpeakable mercy to you: never forget to ſpeak of his mercy. And as your life was formerly devoted to ſin, and to the pleaſures of the world, let it now be ſpent wholly in the ways of GOD; and O embrace every opportunity of doing and of receiving good. Whatſoever opportunity you have, do it vigorouſly, do it ſpeedily, do not defer it. If thou ſeeſt one hurrying on to deſtruction, uſe the utmoſt of thy endeavour to ſtop him in his courſe; ſhew him the need he has of repentance, and that without it he is loſt for ever; do not regard his deſpiſing of you; ſtill go on to ſhew him his danger: and if thy friends mock and deſpiſe, do not let that diſcourage you; hold on, hold out to the end, ſo you ſhall have a crown which is immutable, and that fadeth not away.

Let the love of JESUS to you, keep you alſo humble; do not be high-minded, keep cloſe unto the LORD, obſerve the rules which the LORD JESUS CHRIST has given in his word, and let not the inſtructions be loſt which you are capable of giving. O conſider what reaſon you have to be thankful to the LORD JESUS CHRIST for giving you that repentance you yourſelves had need of: a repentance which worketh by love. Now you find more pleaſure in walking with GOD one hour, than in all your former carnal delights, and all the pleaſures of ſin. O! the joy you feel in your own ſouls, which all the men of this world, and all the devils in hell, though they were to combine together, could not deſtroy. Then fear not their wrath or malice, for through many tribulations we muſt enter into glory.

A few days, or weeks, or years more, and then you will be beyond their reach, you will be in the heavenly *Jeruſalem*; there is all harmony and love, there is all joy and delight; there the weary ſoul is at reſt.

Now we have many enemies, but at death they are all loſt; they cannot follow us beyond the grave: and this is a great encouragement to us not to regard the ſcoffs and jeers of the men of this world.

O let the love of JESUS be in your thoughts continually. It was his dying that brought you life; it was his crucifixion that paid the ſatisfaction for your ſins; his death, burial, and reſurrection that compleated the work; and he is now in heaven, interceding for you at the right-hand of his Father. And can you do too much for the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who has done ſo much for you? His love to you is unfathomable. O the height, the depth, the length and breadth of this love, that brought the King of glory from his throne, to die for ſuch rebels as we are, when we had acted ſo unkindly againſt him, and deſerved nothing but eternal damnation. He came down and took our nature upon him; he was made of fleſh and dwelt among us; he was put to death on our account; he paid our ranſom: ſurely this ſhould make us love the LORD JESUS CHRIST; ſhould make us rejoice in him, and not do as too many do, and as we ourſelves have too often, crucify this JESUS afreſh. Let us do all we can, my dear brethren, to honour him.

Come, all of you, come, and behold him ſtretched out for you; ſee his hands and feet nailed to the croſs. O come, come, my brethren, and nail your ſins thereto; come, come and ſee his ſide pierced; there is a fountain open for ſin, and for uncleanneſs: O waſh, waſh and be clean: come and ſee his head crowned with thorns, and all for you. Can you think of a panting, bleeding, dying JESUS, and not be filled with pity towards him? He underwent all this for you. Come unto him by faith; lay hold on him: there is mercy for every ſoul of you that will come unto him. Then do not delay; fly unto the arms of this JESUS, and you ſhall be made clean in his blood.

O what ſhall I ſay unto you to make you come to JESUS? I have ſhewed you the dreadful conſequence of not repenting of your ſins: and if after all I have ſaid, you are reſolved to perſiſt, your blood will be required at your own heads; but I hope better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation. Let me beg of you to pray in good earneſt for the

grace

grace of repentance. I may never ſee your faces again; but at the day of judgment I will meet you: there you will either bleſs GOD that ever you were moved to repentance; or elſe this ſermon, though in a field, will be as a ſwift witneſs againſt you. Repent, repent therefore, my dear brethren, as *John the Baptiſt*, and as our bleſſed Redeemer himſelf earneſtly exhorted, and turn from your evil ways, and the LORD will have mercy on you.

Shew them, O Father, wherein they have offended thee; make them to ſee their own vileneſs, and that they are loſt and undone without true repentance; and O give them that repentance, we beſeech of thee, that they may turn from ſin unto thee the living and true GOD. Theſe things, and whatever elſe thou ſeeſt needful for us, we entreat that thou wouldſt beſtow upon us, on account of what the dear JESUS CHRIST has done and ſuffered; to whom, with Thyſelf, and holy Spirit, three perſons, and one GOD, be aſcribed, as is moſt due, all power, glory, might, majeſty, and dominion, now, henceforth, and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON XXXIII.

The Goſpel Supper.

LUKE xiv. 22, 23, 24.

And the ſervant ſaid, Lord, it is done as thou haſt commanded, and yet there is room. And the lord ſaid unto the ſervant, Go out into the high-ways, and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my houſe may be filled. For I ſay unto you, that none of thoſe men which were bidden, ſhall taſte of my ſupper.

THOUGH here is a large and ſolemn aſſembly, yet I ſuppoſe you are all convinced, that you are not to live in this world always. May I not take it for granted, that even the moſt prophane amongſt you, do in your hearts believe, what the ſacred oracles have moſt clearly revealed, "That as it is appointed for all men once to die, ſo after death comes the judgment?" Yes, I know you believe, that nothing is more certain, than that we are to "appear before the judgment-ſeat of CHRIST, to be rewarded according to the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil." And, however hard the ſaying may ſeem to you at the firſt hearing, yet I cannot help informing you, that I am thoroughly perſuaded, as many will be driven from that judgment-ſeat, with a "Depart ye curſed into [illegible]laſting fire," for purſuing things in themſelves lawful, out of a wrong principle, and in too intenſe a degree; as for drunkenneſs, adultery, fornication, or any other groſs enormity whatſoever. Bad as the world is, bleſſed be GOD, there are great numbers yet left amongſt us, who either through the reſtraints of a religious education, or ſelf-love,

and

and outward reputation, abſtain from groſs ſin themſelves, and look with deteſtation and abhorrence upon others, who indulge themſelves in it. But then, through an over-eager purſuit after the things of ſenſe and time, their ſouls are inſenſibly lulled into a ſpiritual ſlumber, and by degrees become as dead to GOD, and as deaf to all the gracious invitations of the goſpel, as the moſt abandoned prodigals. It is remarkable, therefore, that our Saviour, knowing how deſperately wicked and treacherous the heart of man was, in this, as well as other reſpects, after he had cautioned his diſciples, and us in them, to "take heed that their hearts were not at any time overcharged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs," immediately adds, "and the cares (the immoderate anxious cares) of this life." For they are of a diſtracting, intoxicating nature, and ſoon overcharge and weigh down the hearts of the children of men. To prevent or remedy this evil, our LORD, during the time of his tabernacling here below, ſpake many parables, but not one more pertinent, not one, in which the freeneſs of the goſpel-call, and the frivolous pretences men frame to excuſe themſelves from embracing it, and the dreadful doom they incur by ſo doing, are more diſplayed, or ſet off in livelier colours, than that to which the words of the text refer. "And the lord ſaid unto the ſervant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my houſe may be filled: For I ſay unto you, that none of thoſe that were bidden ſhall taſte of my ſupper."

In order to have a clear view of the occaſion, ſcope, and contents of the parable, to which theſe words belong, it is neceſſary for us to look back to the very beginning of this chapter. "And it came to paſs, as he went into the houſe of one of the chief phariſees to eat bread, on the ſabbath day, that they watched him." The perſon here ſpoken of, as going into this Phariſee's houſe, is our bleſſed Saviour. For as he came eating and drinking, agreeable to his character, he was free, courteous and affable to all; and therefore though it was on the ſabbath-day, he accepted an invitation, and went into the houſe of one of the chief Phariſees to eat bread, notwithſtanding he knew the Phariſees were his profeſſed enemies, and that they watched him, hoping to find ſome occaſion to upbraid him, either for his diſcourſe or behaviour. If the

Phariſee into whoſe houſe our LORD went, was one of this ſtamp, his invitation beſpeaks him to be a very ill man, and may ſerve to teach us, that much rancour and heart-enmity againſt JESUS CHRIST, may be concealed and cloaked under a great and blazing profeſſion of religion. However, our Saviour was more than a match for all his enemies, and by accepting this invitation, hath warranted his miniſters and diſciples, to comply with the like invitations, and converſe freely about the things of GOD, though thoſe who invite them, may not have real religion at heart. For how knoweſt thou, O man, but thou mayeſt drop ſomething, that may benefit their ſouls, and make them religious indeed? And ſuppoſing they ſhould watch thee, watch thou unto prayer, whilſt thou art in their company, and that ſame JESUS, who went into this Phariſee's houſe, and was ſo faithful and edifying in his converſation when there, will enable thee to go and do likewiſe.

That our LORD's converſation was not trifling, but ſuch as tended to the uſe of edifying, and that he behaved among the gueſts as a faithful phyſician, rather than as a careleſs, indifferent companion, is evident from the 7th verſe of this chapter, where we are told, that "he marked how they choſe the chief rooms;" or, to ſpeak in our common way, were deſirous of ſitting at the upper end of the table. And whether we think of it or not, the LORD JESUS takes notice of our behaviour, even when we are going to ſit down only at our common meals. Would to GOD, all that make a profeſſion of real chriſtianity, conſidered this well! Religion then would not be ſo much confined to church, or meeting, but be brought home to our private houſes, and many needleſs unchriſtian compliments be prevented. For (with grief I ſpeak it) is it not too true, that abundance of profeſſors love, and are too fond of the uppermoſt places in houſes, as well as ſynagogues? This was what our LORD blamed in the gueſts where he now was. He marked, he took notice, he looked before he ſpake (as we ſhould always do, if we would ſpeak to the purpoſe) how they choſe out the chief rooms. Therefore, though they were rich in this world's goods, and were none of his gueſts, yet unwilling to ſuffer the leaſt ſin upon them, or loſe any opportunity of giving inſtruction, he gave

them

them a lecture upon humility, ſaying unto them, or directing his diſcourſe to all in general, though probably he ſpake to one in particular, who ſat near him, and whom, it may be, he took notice of, as more than ordinarily ſolicitous in chooſing a chief room, or couch, on which they lay at meals, after the cuſtom of the *Romans*; "When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding (which ſeems to intimate that this was a wedding-feaſt) ſit not down in the higheſt room, leſt a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him come and ſay to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with ſhame to take the loweſt room. But when thou art bidden, go and ſit down in the loweſt room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may ſay unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then ſhalt thou have worſhip (or reſpect) in the preſence of them who ſit at meat with thee." O glorious example of faithfulneſs and love to ſouls! How ought miniſters eſpcially, to copy after their bleſſed Maſter, and, with ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, mildly and opportunely rebuke the faults of the company they are in, though ſuperior to them in outward circumſtances? What rightly informed perſon, after reading this paſſage, can think they teach right and agreeable to the word of GOD in this reſpect, who ſay, we muſt not, at leaſt need not, reprove natural men? Surely ſuch doctrine cometh not from above! For are we not commanded, in any wiſe, to reprove our neighbour (whether he be a child of GOD or no) and not to ſuffer ſin upon him? Is it not more than probable, that all theſe gueſts were natural men? And yet our LORD reproved them. Help us then, O Saviour, in this and every other inſtance of thy moral conduct, to walk as thou haſt ſet us an example!

Neither did our LORD ſtop here; but obſerving that none but the rich, the mighty, and the noble, were called to the feaſt, he took occaſion alſo from thence, to give even his hoſt (for the beſt return we make our friends for their kindneſs, is to be faithful to their ſouls) one of the chief Phariſees, a wholeſome piece of advice. "Then ſaid he alſo to him that bade him, when thou makeſt a dinner or a ſupper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinſmen nor thy rich neighbours, leſt they alſo bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makeſt a feaſt,

call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou ſhalt be bleſſed; for they cannot recompence thee: For thou ſhalt be recompenced at the reſurrection of the juſt!" Thus did our LORD entertain the company. Words ſpoken in ſuch due ſeaſon, how good are they! Would CHRIST's followers thus exert themſelves, and, when in company, begin ſome uſeful diſcourſe for their great maſter, they know not what good they might do, and how many might be influenced, by their good example, to ſecond them in it.

An inſtance of this we have in the 14th verſe: "And when one of them that ſat at meat with him heard theſe things, he ſaid unto him, Bleſſed is he that ſhall eat bread in the kingdom of GOD." Happy they who ſhall be recompenced at that reſurrection of the juſt, which thou haſt been ſpeaking of. A very pertinent ſaying this! every way ſuitable to perſons ſitting down to eat bread on earth, which we ſhould never do, without talking of, and longing for that time, when we ſhall ſit down and eat bread in the kingdom of heaven. This opened to our LORD a freſh topic of converſation, and occaſioned the parable, which is to be the more immediate ſubject of your preſent meditation. As though he had ſaid to the perſon that ſpoke laſt, Thou ſayeſt right: bleſſed are they indeed, who ſhall ſit down to eat bread in the kingdom of GOD: But alas! moſt men, eſpecially you Phariſees, act as if you did not believe this; and therefore he ſaid unto him, "A certain man made a great ſupper, and bade many;" by the certain man making a great ſupper, we are to underſtand GOD the Father, who has made proviſion for periſhing ſouls, by the obedience and death of his beloved Son CHRIST JESUS. This proviſion is here repreſented under the character of a ſupper, becauſe the *Cæna* or ſupper, among the ancients, was their grand meal: Men could never have made ſuch proviſion for themſelves, or angels for them. No, our ſalvation is all from GOD, from the beginning to the end. He made it, and not we ourſelves; and it is wholly owing to the divine wiſdom, and not our own, that we are become GOD's people, and the ſheep of his paſture. This proviſion for periſhing ſouls, may be juſtly called *great*, becauſe there is rich and ample proviſion made in the goſpel for a great many ſouls. For however CHRIST's flock may be but a little flock, when aſunder,

aſunder, yet when they come all together, they will be a multitude which no man can number. And it is eſpecially called *great*, becauſe it was purchaſed at ſo great a price, the price of CHRIST's moſt precious blood. And therefore, when the apoſtle would exhort the chriſtians to glorify GOD in their ſouls and bodies, he makes uſe of this glorious motive, "That they were bought with a price." He does not ſay what price, but barely a *price*, emphatically ſo called; as though all the prices in the world were nothing (as indeed they are not) when compared to this price of CHRIST's moſt precious blood.

For theſe reaſons, JESUS ſaid in the parable, "A certain man made a great ſupper, and bade many, and ſent his ſervant at ſupper-time, to ſay to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready." He bade many; the eternal GOD took the *Jews* for his peculiar people, under the *Moſaic* diſpenſation; and by types, ſhadows, and propheſies of the Old Teſtament, invited them to partake of the glorious privileges of the goſpel. "But at ſupper-time," in the fulneſs of time, which GOD the Father had decreed from eternity, in the evening of the world (for which reaſon the goſpel times are called the laſt times) "he ſent his ſervant," CHRIST his Son, here called his ſervant, becauſe acting as Mediator he was inferior to the Father; therefore ſays the prophet *Iſaiah*, "Behold my ſervant whom I have choſen:" "to ſay to them that were bidden," to the profeſſing *Jews*, called by St. *John*, "his own," that is, his peculiar profeſſing people — with this meſſage, "Come;" repent and believe the goſpel. Nothing is required on man's part, but to come, or accept of the goſpel offer. It is not according to the old covenant, "Do and live;" but only "come, believe, and thou ſhalt be ſaved." All things are ready. Nothing is wanting on GOD's part. "All things are now ready." There ſeems to be a particular emphaſis to be put upon NOW, implying, this was an eſpecial ſeaſon of grace, and GOD was now exerting his laſt efforts, to ſave loſt man. Well then, if the great GOD be at ſo great an expence, to make ſo great a ſupper, for periſhing creatures, and ſends ſo great a perſon as his own Son, in the form of a ſervant, to invite them to come to it; one would imagine, that all who heard theſe glad tidings, ſhould readily ſay, LORD, lo we come. But inſtead of this,

we

we are told, "They all, (the greateſt part of the *Jews*) with one conſent began to make excuſe." Conſcience told them they ought to come, and in all probability they had ſome faint deſire to come; and they had nothing, as we hear of, to object either againſt the perſon who prepared the ſupper, or the perſon that invited them, or the entertainment itſelf; neither do we hear that they treated either with contempt, as is the cuſtom of too many in the days wherein we live. In all probability, they acknowledged all was very good, and that it was kind in that certain man, to ſend them ſuch an invitation. But being very buſy, and as they thought very lawfully engaged, they begun to make excuſe.

But the excuſes they made, rendered their refuſal inexcuſable. "The firſt ſaid unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I muſt needs go and ſee it:" Thou fool, buy a piece of ground, and then go ſee it! A prudent man would have gone and ſeen the ground firſt, and bought it afterwards. Why muſt he *needs* go? At leaſt, why muſt he needs go *now*? The land was his own, could he not therefore have accepted the invitation to-day, and gone and ſeen his eſtate, or plantation, on the morrow? As he had bought it, he need not fear loſing his bargain, by anothers buying it from him. But notwithſtanding all this, there is a needs muſt for his going, and therefore ſays he, "I pray thee, have me excuſed," and improve thy intereſt with thy maſter in my behalf. This was a bad excuſe.

The ſecond was rather worſe. For what ſays the evangeliſt, verſe 19? "And another ſaid, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them:" One, it ſeems, had been buying an eſtate; another, cattle, to ſtock an eſtate already bought; and both equally fooliſh in making their bargains. For this ſecond had bought five yoke of oxen, which muſt needs coſt them a conſiderable ſum, perhaps all he had in the world, and now he muſt go and prove them. A wiſe dealer would have proved the oxen firſt, and bought them afterwards: But our Saviour ſpeaks this, to ſhew us, that we will truſt one another, nay I may add, the devil himſelf, more than we will truſt GOD.

The excuſe which the third makes, is worſt of all. "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Had he

ſaid,

ſaid, I will not come, he had ſpoken the real ſentiments of his heart: for it is not ſo much mens impotency, as their want of a will, and inclination, that keeps them from the goſpel-feaſt. But why cannot he come? He has "married a wife." Has he ſo? Why then, by all means he ſhould come. For the ſupper to which he was invited, as it ſhould ſeem, was a wedding-ſupper, and would have ſaved him the trouble of a nuptial entertainment. It was a great ſupper, and conſequently there was proviſion enough for him, and his bride too. And it was made by a great man, who ſent out his ſervant to bid many, ſo that he need not have doubted of meeting with a hearty welcome, though he ſhould bring his wife with him. Or ſuppoſing his wife was unwilling to come, yet as the huſband is the head of the wife, he ought to have laid his commands on her, to accompany him. For we cannot do better for our yoke-fellows, than to bring them to the goſpel-feaſt. Or, ſuppoſing after all, ſhe would not be prevailed upon, he ought to have gone without her: for "thoſe that have wives, muſt be as though they had none;" and we muſt not let carnal affection get ſuch an aſcendancy over us, as to be kept thereby from ſpiritual entertainments. *Adam* paid dear for hearkening to the voice of his wife: and ſometimes, unleſs we forſake wives, as well as houſes and lands, we cannot be the LORD's diſciples.

This then was the reception the ſervant met with, and ſuch were the excuſes, and anſwers, that were ſent back. And what was the conſequence? "So that ſervant came (no doubt with a ſorrowful heart) and ſhewed his LORD theſe things." However little it be thought of, yet miniſters muſt ſhew the LORD, what ſucceſs their miniſtry meets with. We muſt ſhew it to our LORD here. We muſt ſpread the caſe before him in prayer. We muſt ſhew it to our LORD hereafter, before the general aſſembly of the whole world. But how dreadful is it, when miniſters are obliged to go upon their knees, crying, "O! my leanneſs, my leanneſs!" and *Elias*-like, to intercede as it were againſt thoſe, to whom they would not only have imparted the goſpel, but even their own lives. It is a heart-breaking conſideration. But thus it muſt be; "The ſervant came and ſhewed the LORD theſe things;" ſo muſt we. Well, and what ſays the LORD?

We

We are told, verſe 21ſt, that "the maſter of the houſe was angry?" Not with the ſervant: for though *Iſrael* be not gathered, yet ſhall CHRIST be glorious; and faithful miniſters ſhall be rewarded, whether people obey the goſpel or not. "We are a ſweet ſavour unto GOD, whether the word be a ſavour of life unto life, or a ſavour of death unto death." The maſter of the houſe therefore was angry, not with the ſervant, but with theſe-worldly-minded, pleaſure-taking refuſers of his gracious invitation; who, in all probability, went to ſee and ſtock their eſtates, and attend upon their brides, not doubting, but their excuſes would be taken, becauſe they were lawfully employed. And, indeed, in one ſenſe, their excuſes were accepted. For I do not hear that they were ever invited any more. GOD took them at their word, though they would not take him at his. They begged to be excuſed, and they were excuſed, as we ſhall ſee in the ſequel of this parable. Let us not therefore harden our hearts, as in the day of provocation; "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation." But muſt the feaſt want gueſts? No, if they cannot, or will not come, others ſhall, and will. The maſter of the houſe therefore being angry, ſent the ſervant upon a ſecond errand. "Go out quickly into the ſtreets, and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind." Every word beſpeaks a ſpirit of reſentment and importunity. Go out quickly, make no delay, dread no attempt or danger, into the ſtreets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither, not only call them, but bring them in (for the maſter here, to encourage the ſervant, aſſures him of ſucceſs) the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. This was fulfilled, when JESUS CHRIST, after the goſpel was rejected by the *Jews*, went and invited the *Gentiles*, and when the publicans and harlots took the kingdom of GOD by a holy violence, whilſt the ſelf-righteous ſcribes and Phariſees rejected the kingdom of GOD againſt themſelves. This was alſo a home reproof to the rich Phariſee, at whoſe houſe the LORD JESUS was, as well as a cutting leſſon to the other gueſts. For our Saviour would hereby ſhew them, that GOD took a quite different method from his hoſt, and was not above receiving the poor, and halt, and blind, and maimed, to the goſpel ſupper, though he had called none

ſuch

ſuch to ſit down at his table. Whether the gueſts reſented it or not, we are not told. But if they were not quite blind, both hoſt and gueſts might eaſily ſee that the parable was ſpoken againſt them. But to proceed,

The ſervant again returns, but with a more pleaſing anſwer than before, "Lord, it is done as thou haſt commanded, and yet there is room." The words beſpeak the ſervant to be full of joy at the thoughts of the ſucceſs he had met with. None can tell, but thoſe who experience it, what comfort miniſters have in ſeeing their labours bleſt. "Now I live, (ſays the apoſtle) if you ſtand faſt in the LORD. Ye are our joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the LORD JESUS." "Lord, it is done as thou haſt commanded. The poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind, have been called, and have obeyed the ſummons, and I have brought them with me; yet, LORD, thy houſe, and thy ſupper is ſo great, there is room for more. Hereby he inſinuated that he wanted to be employed again, in calling more ſouls; and the more we do, the more may we do for GOD: "To him that hath, ſhall be given;" and preſent ſucceſs is a great encouragement to future diligence. Such hints are pleaſing to our Saviour. He delights to ſee his miniſters ready for new work, and waiting for freſh orders. "The Lord, therefore, we are told, ver. 23, ſaid unto his ſervant, (the ſame ſervant,) Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my houſe may be filled; 24. For I ſay unto you, that none of thoſe who are bidden, ſhall taſte of my ſupper." O cutting words to thoſe that ſat at meat, if they had hearts to make the application! But glad tidings of great joy to the publicans, harlots, and Gentiles, who were rejected by the proud Phariſees, as aliens to the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, and ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe! This was fulfilled, when our LORD ſent the apoſtles, not only into the ſtreets and lanes of the city, and places bordering upon *Jeruſalem* and *Judea*; but when he gave them a commiſſion to go out into all the world, and preach the goſpel to every creature, *Gentile* as well as *Jew*; and not only gave them a command, but bleſſed their labours with ſuch ſucceſs, that three thouſand were converted in one day. And I am not without hopes that it will be ſtill further fulfilled, by the calling of ſome of

you

you home this day: For however this parable was ſpoken originally to the *Jews*, and upon a particular occaſion, as at a feaſt, yet it is applicable to us, and to our children, and to as many as are afar off; yea, to as many as the LORD our GOD ſhall call. It gives a ſanction, methinks, to preaching in the fields, and other places beſides the ſynagogues; and points out the reception the goſpel meets with in theſe days, in ſuch a lively manner, that one would think it had a particular reference to the preſent age. For is it not too, too plain, that the goſpel-offers, and goſpel-grace, have been ſlighted, and made light of, by many profeſſors of this generation? We have been in the churches, telling them, again and again, that GOD has made a great ſupper (and has invited many, even them) and ſent us by his providence and his ſpirit, "to ſay unto them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready. Believe on the LORD JESUS, and you ſhall be ſaved." But the generality of the laity have made light of it, they have given us the hearing, but are too buſy in their farms and their merchandizes, their marrying and giving in marriage, to come and be bleſſed in the LORD of life. We have told them, again and again, that we do not want them to hide themſelves from the world, but to teach them how they may live in, and yet not be of it. But all will not do. Many of the clergy alſo (like the letter-learned Scribes and Phariſees in our Saviour's time) reject the kingdom of GOD againſt themſelves, and deny us the uſe of the pulpits, for no other reaſon but becauſe we preach the doctrine of juſtification in the ſight of GOD by faith alone, and invite ſinners to come and taſte of the goſpel feaſt freely, without money and without price.

Whatever they may think, we are perſuaded, the great maſter of the houſe is angry with them, for being angry with us without a cauſe. He therefore now, by his providence, bids us "Go out quickly into the ſtreets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind," or call in the publicans and harlots, the common curſers and ſwearers, and ſabbath-breakers, and adulterers, who, perhaps, never entered a church door, or heard that JESUS CHRIST died for ſuch ſinners as they are. We, through grace, have obeyed the command, we have gone out, though

expoſed

expoſed to much contempt for ſo doing, and, bleſſed be GOD, our labour has not been in vain in the LORD. For many have been made willing in the day of GOD's power; and, we would ſpeak it with humility, we can go chearfully to our Saviour, and ſay, "It is done, LORD, as thou haſt commanded, and yet there is room." He is therefore pleaſed, in ſpite of all oppoſition from men or devils, to continue, and renew, and enlarge our commiſſion; he hath ſent us literally into the highways and hedges; and, I truſt, has given us a commiſſion to compel ſinners to come: For, could we ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels, yet if the LORD did not attend the word with his power, and ſweetly inclined men's wills to comply with the goſpel-call, we ſhould be as a ſounding braſs, or a tinkling cymbal. But this we believe our Saviour will do, for his houſe muſt be filled: every ſoul for whom he has ſhed his blood, ſhall finally be ſaved, "and all that the Father hath given him, ſhall come unto him, and whoſoever cometh unto him he will in no wiſe caſt out." This comforted our LORD, when his goſpel was rejected by the *Jews*. As though he had ſaid, Well, tho' you deſpiſe the offers of my grace, yet I ſhall not ſhed my blood in vain; for all that the Father hath given me ſhall come unto me.

Supported by this conſideration, I am not aſhamed to come out this day into the highways and hedges, and to confeſs that my buſineſs is to call the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind, ſelf-condemned, helpleſs ſinners, to the marriage-feaſt of the ſupper of the Lamb. My cry is, Come, believe on the LORD JESUS; throw yourſelves at the footſtool of his mercy, and you ſhall be ſaved; for all things are now ready. GOD the Father is ready, GOD the Son is ready, GOD the Holy Ghoſt is ready; the bleſſed angels above are ready, and the bleſſed ſaints below are ready, to welcome you to the goſpel-feaſt. A perfect and everlaſting righteouſneſs is now wrought out by JESUS CHRIST. GOD, now, upon honourable terms, can acquit the guilty. GOD can now be juſt, and yet juſtify the ungodly. "For he hath made CHRIST to be ſin for us, who knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him." The fatted calf is now killed, and "CHRIST, our paſſover, is

[

[illegible] h
[illegible]ally to the [illegible], and [illegible]
feast, yet it is applicable to
many as are afar off; yea
shall call. It gives a sanct
fields, and other places bef
the reception the gospel m
lively manner, that one w
rence to the present age. I
gospel-offers, and gospel-g
light of, by many professor
in the churches, telling th
made a great supper (and
sent us by his providence
were bidden, Come, for
on the LORD JESUS, and
rality of the laity have n
the hearing, but are too
chandizes, their marryin
and be blessed in the L
again and again, that w
from the world, but to
yet not be of it. But
also (like the letter-le
our's time) reject the
and deny us the use o
because we preach th
GOD by faith alone,
the gospel feast free

Whatever they n
master of the house i
us without a cause.
bids us "Go out q
and bring in the p
the blind," or ca
cursers and swe
who, perhaps,
JESUS CHRIST
grace, have o

ſacrificed for us." Come, ſinners, and feed upon him in your hearts by faith, with thankſgiving. For JESUS CHRIST's ſake, do not with one conſent begin to make excuſe. Do not let a piece of ground, five yoke of oxen, or even a wife, keep you from this great ſupper. Theſe you may enjoy, as the gifts of GOD, and make uſe of them for the Mediator's glory, and yet be preſent at the goſpel-feaſt. True and undefiled religion does not take away, but rather greatly enhances the comforts of life; and our LORD did not pray that we ſhould be taken out of the world, but "that we ſhould be delivered from the evil of it." O then that you would all, with one conſent, ſay, Lo! we come. Aſſure yourſelves there is proviſion enough. For it is a great ſupper. In our Father's houſe there is bread enough and to ſpare. And though a great GOD makes the ſupper, yet he is as good and condeſcending as he is great. Though he be the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, yet he will dwell with the humble and contrite heart, even with the man that trembleth at his word. Neither can you complain for want of room; "for yet there is room. In our Father's houſe are many manſions." If it was not ſo, our Saviour would have told us. The grace of CHRIST is as rich, as free, and as powerful as ever. He is "the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever:" He is full of grace and truth, and out of his fulneſs, all that come to him may receive grace for grace. He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not. He willeth not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he ſhould believe and live. Come then, all ye halt, poor, maimed, and blind ſinners; take comfort, the LORD JESUS has ſent his ſervant to call you. It is now ſupper-time, and a day of uncommon grace. The day may be far ſpent. Haſte, therefore, and away to the ſupper of the Lamb. If you do not come, I know the maſter will be angry. And who can ſtand before him when he is angry? "Harden not therefore your hearts, as in the day of provocation, as in the day of temptation in the wilderneſs." Do not provoke the LORD to ſay, "None of thoſe that were bidden ſhall taſte of my ſupper." O dreadful words! Much more is implied in them than is expreſſed. It is the ſame with that in the pſalms, "I ſware in my wrath, that they ſhould not enter into my reſt." And if you do not enter into GOD's reſt, nor taſte of CHRIST's ſupper, you muſt lift up

your eyes in torments, where you will have no reſt, and muſt ſup with the damned devils for ever more.

Knowing therefore the terrors of the LORD, we perſuade you to haſte away; and make no more frivolous excuſes. For there is no excuſe againſt believing. Perhaps you ſay, You are call to the halt, and maimed, and blind, and poor. But if we are halt, and maimed, how can we come? If we are blind, how can we ſee our way? If we are poor, how can we expect admiſſion to ſo great a table? Ah! Happy are ye, if you are ſenſible, that you are halt and maimed. For if you feel yourſelves ſo, and are lamenting it, who knows but whilſt I am ſpeaking, GOD may ſend his Spirit with the word, and fetch you home? Though you are blind, JESUS has eye-ſalve to anoint you. Though you are poor, yet you are welcome to this rich feaſt. It coſt JESUS CHRIST a great price, but you ſhall have it gratis. For ſuch as you was it deſigned. "Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Rich, ſelf-righteous, ſelf-ſufficient ſinners, I know, will ſcorn both the feaſt and its great provider. They have done ſo already, therefore the LORD has ſent us into the high-ways and hedges, to bring ſuch poor ſouls as you are in. Venture then, my dear friends, and honour GOD, by taking him at his word. Come to the marriage-feaſt. Believe me, you will there partake of moſt delicious fare.

Tell me, ye that have been made to taſte that the LORD is gracious, will you not recommend this feaſt to all? Are you not, whilſt I am ſpeaking, ready to cry out, Come all ye that are without, come ye, obey the call, for we have ſat under the Redeemer's ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit has been pleaſant to our taſte. Whilſt I am ſpeaking, does not the fire kindle, do not your hearts burn with a deſire that others may come and be bleſſed too? If you are chriſtians indeed, I know you will be thus minded, and the language of your hearts will be, LORD, whilſt he is calling, let thy Spirit compel them to come in. O that the LORD may ſay, *Amen!* And why ſhould we doubt? Surely our Saviour will not let me complain this day that I have laboured in vain, and ſpent my ſtrength for nought. Methinks I ſee many deſiring to come. O how ſhall I compel you to come forwards. I will not uſe fire or ſword, as

the *Papiſts* do, by terribly perverting this text of ſcripture. But I will tell you of the love of GOD, the love of GOD in CHRIST, and ſurely that muſt compel you, that muſt conſtrain you, whether you will or not. Sinners, my heart is enlarged towards you. I could fill my mouth with arguments. Conſider the greatneſs of the GOD who makes the ſupper. Conſider the greatneſs of the price, wherewith it was purchaſed. Conſider the greatneſs of the proviſion made for you. What would you have more? Conſider GOD's infinite condeſcenſion, in calling you now, when you might have been in hell, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." And that you might be without excuſe, he has ſent his ſervant into the highways and hedges to invite you there. O that you taſted what I do now! I am ſure you would not want arguments to induce you to come in: No, you would fly to the goſpel-feaſt, as doves to the windows.

But, poor ſouls! many of you, perhaps, are not hungry. You do not feel yourſelves halt, or maimed, or blind, and therefore you have no reliſh for this ſpiritual entertainment. Well, be not angry with me for calling you; be not offended if I weep over you, becauſe you know not the day of your viſitation: If I muſt appear in judgment as a ſwift witneſs againſt you, I muſt. But that thought chills my blood! I cannot bear it; I feel that I could lay down my life for you. But I am not willing to go without you. What ſay you, my dear friends? I would put the queſtion to you once more, Will you taſte of CHRIST's ſupper, or will you not? You ſhall all be welcome. There is milk at this feaſt for babes, as well as meat for ſtrong men, and for perſons of riper years. There is room and proviſion for high and low, rich and poor, one with another; and our Saviour will thank you for coming. Amazing condeſcenſion! Aſtoniſhing love! The thought of it quite overcomes me. Help me, help me, O believers, to bleſs and praiſe him.

And O! that his love may excite us to come afreſh to him, as though we had never come before! For, though we have been often feaſted, yet our ſouls will ſtarve, unleſs we renew our acts of faith, and throw ourſelves, as loſt, undone ſinners, continually at the feet of CHRIST. Feeding upon paſt experiences will not ſatisfy our ſouls, any more than what

we did eat yeſterday will ſuſtain our bodies to day. No, ... lievers muſt look for freſh influences of divine grace, and b... of the LORD to water them every moment. The parab... therefore ſpeaks to ſaints as well as ſinners. Come ye to th... marriage-feaſt; you are as welcome now as ever. And may GOD ſet your ſouls a longing for that time when we ſhall ſit down and eat bread in the kingdom of heaven! There we ſhall have full draughts of divine love, and enjoy the glorious Emmanuel for ever more. Even ſo, LORD JESUS, *Amen.*

SERMON XXXIV.

The Phariſee and Publican.

LUKE xviii. 14.

I tell you, this man went down to his houſe juſtified rather than the other: For every one that exalteth himſelf, ſhall be abaſed; and he that humbleth himſelf, ſhall be exalted.

THOUGH there be ſome who dare to deny the LORD JESUS, and diſbelieve the revelation he has been pleaſed to give us, and thereby bring upon themſelves ſwift deſtruction; yet I would charitably hope there are but few if any ſuch among you, to whom I am now to preach the kingdom of GOD. Was I to aſk you, how you expect to be juſtified in the ſight of an offended GOD? I ſuppoſe you would anſwer, only for the ſake of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. But, was I to come more home to your conſciences, I fear that moſt would make the LORD JESUS but in part their Saviour, and go about, as it were, to eſtabliſh a righteouſneſs of their own. And this is not thinking contrary to the rules of chriſtian charity: for we are all ſelf-righteous by nature; it is as natural for us to turn to a covenant of works, as for the ſparks to fly upwards. We have had ſo many legal and ſo few free-grace preachers, for theſe many years, that moſt profeſſors now ſeem to be ſettled upon their lees, and rather deſerve the title of *Phariſees* than chriſtians.

Thus it was with the generality of the people during the time of our LORD's public miniſtration: and therefore, in almoſt all his diſcourſes, he preached the goſpel to poor ſinners, and denounced terrible woes againſt proud ſelf-juſticiaries. The parable, to which the words of the text belong, looks

both theſe ways: For the evangeliſt informs us (ver. 9.) that our LORD "ſpake it unto certain who truſted in themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others." And a notable parable it is; a parable worthy of your moſt ſerious attention. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," what JESUS CHRIST ſpeaks to all viſible profeſſors in it.

Ver. 10. "Two men went up to the temple to pray (and never two men of more oppoſite characters) the one a Phariſee and the other a Publican." The Phariſees were the ſtricteſt ſect among the *Jews*. "I was of the ſtricteſt ſect, of the Phariſees," ſays *Paul*. They prayed often; not only ſo, but they made long prayers; and, that they might appear extraordinary devout, they would pray at the corners of the ſtreet, where two ways met, that people going or coming, both ways, might ſee them. "They made broad (as our LORD informs us) the borders of their phylacteries," they had pieces of parchment ſown to their long robes, on which ſome parts of the Scripture were written, that people might from thence infer, that they were lovers of the law of GOD. They were ſo very punctual and exact in outward purifications, that they waſhed at their going out and coming in. They held the waſhing of pots, brazen veſſels and tables, and many other ſuch-like things they did. They were very zealous for the traditions of the fathers, and for the obſervation of the rites and ceremonies of the church, notwithſtanding they frequently made void the law of GOD by their traditions. And they were ſo exceedingly exact in the outward obſervation of the ſabbath, that they condemned our LORD for making a little clay with his ſpittle; and called him a ſinner, and ſaid, he was not of GOD, becauſe he had given ſight to a man born blind, on the ſabbath-day. For theſe reaſons they were had in high veneration among the people, who were ſadly miſled by theſe blind guides: they had the uppermoſt places in the ſynagogues, and greetings in the market-places (which they loved dearly) and were called of men, *Rabbi*; in ſhort, they had ſuch a reputation for piety, that it became a proverb among the *Jews*, that, if there were but two men ſaved, the one of them muſt be a Phariſee.

As for the Publicans, it was not ſo with them. It ſeems they were ſometimes *Jews*, or at leaſt proſelytes of the gate;

for we find one here coming up to the temple; but for the generality, I am apt to think they were *Gentiles*; for they were gatherers of the *Roman* taxes, and uſed to amaſs much wealth (as appears by the confeſſion of *Zaccheus*, one of the chief of them) by wronging men with falſe accuſations. They were ſo univerſally infamous, that our LORD himſelf tells his diſciples, "the excommunicated man ſhould be to them as a heathen man, or a Publican." And the Phariſees thought it a ſufficient impeachment of our LORD's character, that he was a friend to Publicans and ſinners, and went to ſit down with them at meat.

But, however they diſagreed in other things, they agreed in this, that public worſhip is a duty incumbent upon all: for they both came up to the temple. The very heathens were obſervers of temple-worſhip. We have very early notice of mens ſacrificing to, and calling upon the name of the LORD, in the Old Teſtament; and I find it no where contradicted in the New. Our LORD, and his apoſtles, went up to the temple; and we are commanded by the apoſtle, "not to forſake the aſſembling ourſelves together," as the manner of too many is in our days; and ſuch too, as would have us think well of them, though they ſeldom or never tread the courts of the LORD's houſe. But, though our devotions begin in our cloſets, they muſt not end there. And, if people never ſhew their devotions abroad, I muſt ſuſpect they have little or none at home. "Two men went up to the temple." And what went they thither for? Not (as multitudes amongſt us do) to make the houſe of GOD a houſe of merchandize, or turn it into a den of thieves; much leſs to ridicule the preacher, or diſturb the congregation; no, they came to the temple, ſays our LORD, "to pray." Thither ſhould the tribes of GOD's ſpiritual *Iſrael* go up, to talk with, and pour out their hearts before the mighty GOD of *Jacob*.

"Two men went up to the temple to pray." I fear one of them forgot his errand. I have often been at a loſs what to call the *Phariſee*'s addreſs; it certainly does not deſerve the name of a prayer: he may rather be ſaid to come to the temple to *boaſt*, than to pray; for I do not find one word of confeſſion of his original guilt; not one ſingle petition for pardon of his paſt actual ſins, or for grace to help and aſſiſt him for the time

time to come: he only brings to GOD, as it were, a reckoning of his performances; and does that, which no fleſh can juſtly do, I mean, glory in his preſence.

Ver. 11. "The Phariſee ſtood, and prayed thus with himſelf; GOD, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, or even as this Publican."

Our LORD firſt takes notice of his poſture; "the Phariſee *ſtood*," he is not to be condemned for that; for ſtanding, as well as kneeling, is a proper poſture for prayer. "When you ſtand praying," ſays our LORD; though ſometimes our LORD kneeled, nay, lay flat on his face upon the ground; his apoſtles alſo kneeled, as we read in the *Acts*, which has made me wonder at ſome, who are ſo bigotted to ſtanding in family, as well as public prayer, that they will not kneel, notwithſtanding all kneel that are around them. I fear there is ſomething of the Phariſee in this conduct. Kneeling and ſtanding are indifferent, if the knee of the ſoul be bent, and the heart upright towards GOD. We ſhould ſtudy not to be particular in indifferent things, leſt we offend weak minds. What the Phariſee is remarked for, is his "ſtanding by himſelf:" for the words may be rendered, he ſtood by himſelf, upon ſome eminent place, at the upper part of the temple, near the Holy of holies, that the congregation might ſee what a devout man he was: or it may be underſtood as we read it, he prayed by himſelf, or of himſelf, out of his own heart; he did not pray by form; it was an extempore prayer: for there are many Phariſees that pray and preach too, extempore. I do not ſee why theſe may not be acquired, as well as other arts and ſciences. A man, with a good elocution, ready turn of thought, and good memory, may repeat his own or other mens ſermons, and, by the help of a *Wilkins* or *Henry*, may pray ſeemingly excellently well, and yet not have the leaſt grain of true grace in his heart; I ſpeak this, not to cry down extempore prayer, or to diſcourage thoſe dear ſouls who really pray by the ſpirit; I only would hereby give a word of reproof to thoſe who are ſo bigotted to extempore prayer, that they condemn, at leaſt judge, all that uſe forms, as though not ſo holy and heavenly, as others who pray without them. Alas! this is wrong. Not every one that prays extempore is a ſpiritual, nor every one that prays with a form, a formal man. Let us not judge one another; let not him that uſes a form, judge him

that prays extempore, on that account; and let not him that prays extempore, deſpiſe him who uſes a form.

"The Phariſee ſtood, and prayed thus by himſelf." Which may ſignify alſo praying inwardly in his heart; for there is a way (and that an excellent one too) of praying when we cannot ſpeak; thus *Anna* prayed, when ſhe ſpoke not aloud, only her lips moved. Thus GOD ſays to *Moſes*, "Why crieſt thou?" when, it is plain, he did not ſpeak a word. This is what the apoſtle means by the "ſpirit making interceſſion (for believers) with groanings which cannot be uttered." For there are times when the ſoul is too big to ſpeak; when GOD fills it as it were, and overſhadows it with his preſence, ſo that it can only fall down, worſhip, adore, and lye in the duſt before the LORD. Again, there is a time when the ſoul is benumbed, barren and dry, and the believer has not a word to ſay to his heavenly Father; and then the heart only can ſpeak. And I mention this for the encouragement of weak chriſtians, who think they never are accepted but when they have a flow of words, and fancy they do not pleaſe GOD at the bottom, for no other reaſon but becauſe they do not pleaſe themſelves. Such would do well to conſider, that GOD knows the language of the heart, and the mind of the ſpirit; and that we make uſe of words, not to inform GOD, but to affect ourſelves. Whenever therefore any of you find yourſelves in ſuch a frame, be not diſcouraged: offer yourſelves up in ſilence before GOD, as clay in the hands of the potter, for him to write and ſtamp his own divine image upon your ſouls. But I believe the Phariſee knew nothing of this way of prayer: he was ſelf-righteous, a ſtranger to the divine life; and therefore either of the former explanations may be beſt put upon theſe words.

"He ſtood, and prayed thus with himſelf; GOD, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioner, unjuſt, adulterer, or even as this Publican." Here is ſome appearance of devotion, but it is only in appearance. To thank GOD that we are not extortioners, unjuſt, adulterers, and as wicked in our practices as other men are, is certainly meet, right, and our bounden duty: for whatever degrees of goodneſs there may be in us, more than in others, it is owing to GOD's reſtraining, preventing, and aſſiſting grace. We are all equally conceived and born in ſin; all are fallen ſhort of the glory of GOD, and liable

liable to all the curſes and maledictions of the law; ſo that "he who glorieth, muſt glory only in the LORD." For none of us have any thing which we did not receive; and whatever we have received, we did not in the leaſt merit it, nor could we lay the leaſt claim to it on any account whatever: we are wholly indebted to free grace for all. Had the Phariſee thought thus, when he ſaid, "GOD, I thank thee that I am not as other men are," it would have been an excellent introduction to his prayer: but he was a free-willer, as well as ſelf-righteous (for he that is one muſt be the other) and thought by his own power and ſtrength, he had kept himſelf from theſe vices. And yet I do not ſee what reaſon he had to truſt in himſelf that he was righteous, merely becauſe he was not an extortioner, unjuſt, adulterer; for all this while he might be, as he certainly was (as is alſo every ſelf-righteous perſon) as proud as the devil. But he not only boaſts, but lies before GOD (as all ſelf-juſticiaries will be found liars here or hereafter.) He thanks GOD that he was not unjuſt: but is it not an act of the higheſt injuſtice to rob GOD of his prerogative? is it not an act of injuſtice to judge our neighbour? and yet of both theſe crimes this ſelf-righteous vaunter is guilty. "Even as this Publican!" He ſeems to ſpeak with the utmoſt diſdain; this Publican! Perhaps he pointed at the poor man, that others might treat him with the like contempt. Thou proud, confident boaſter, what hadſt thou to do with that poor Publican? ſuppoſing other Publicans were unjuſt, and extortioners, did it therefore follow that he muſt be ſo? or, if he had been ſuch a ſinner, how knoweſt thou but he has repented of thoſe ſins? His coming up to the temple to pray, is one good ſign of a reformation at leaſt. Thou art therefore inexcuſable, O Phariſee, who thus judgeſt the Publican: for thou that judgeſt him to be unjuſt, art, in the very act of judging, unjuſt thyſelf: thy ſacrifice is only the ſacrifice of a fool.

We have ſeen what the Phariſee's negative goodneſs comes to; I think, nothing at all. Let us ſee how far his poſitive goodneſs extends; for, if we are truly religious, we ſhall not only eſchew evil, but alſo do good: "I faſt twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I poſſeſs."

The Phariſee is not here condemned for his faſting, for faſting is a chriſtian duty; "when you faſt," ſays our LORD, thereby

thereby taking it for granted that his diſciples would faſt. And "when the bridegroom ſhall be taken away, then ſhall they faſt in thoſe days." "In faſting often," ſays the apoſtle. And all that would not be caſt-aways, will take care, as their privilege, without legal conſtraint, to "keep their bodies under, and bring them into ſubjection." The Phariſee is only condemned for making a righteouſneſs of his faſting, and thinking that GOD would accept him, or that he was any better than his neighbours, merely on account of his faſting: this is what he was blamed for. The Phariſee was not to be diſcommended for faſting twice in a week; I wiſh ſome chriſtians would imitate him more in this: but to depend on faſting in the leaſt, for his juſtification in the ſight of GOD, was really abominable. "I give tithes of all that I poſſeſs." He might as well have ſaid, I pay tithes. But ſelf-righteous people (whatever they may ſay to the contrary) think they give ſomething to GOD. "I give tithes of all that I poſſeſs:" I make conſcience of giving tithes, not only of all that the law requires, but of my mint, anniſe, and cummin, of all things whatſoever I poſſeſs; this was well; but to boaſt of ſuch things, or of faſting, is phariſaical and deviliſh. Now then let us ſum up all the righteouſneſs of this boaſting Phariſee, and ſee what little reaſon he had to truſt in himſelf, that he was righteous, or to deſpiſe others. He is not unjuſt (but we have only his bare word for that, I think I have proved the contrary;) he is no adulterer, no extortioner; he faſts twice in the week, and gives tithes of all that he poſſeſſes; and all this he might do, and a great deal more, and yet be a child of the devil: for here is no mention made of his loving the LORD his GOD with all his heart, which was the "firſt and great commandment of the law;" here is not a ſingle ſyllable of inward religion; and he was not a true *Jew*, who was only one outwardly. It is only an outſide piety at the beſt; inwardly he is full of pride, ſelf-juſtification, free-will and great uncharitableneſs.

Were not the Phariſees, do you think, highly offended at this character? for they might eaſily know it was ſpoken againſt them. And though, perhaps, ſome of you may be offended at me, yet, out of love, I muſt tell you, I fear this parable is ſpoken againſt many of you: for are there not many

of

of you, who go up to the temple to pray, with no better ſpirit than this Phariſee did? And becauſe you faſt, it may be in the *Lent*, or every *Friday*, and becauſe you do no body any harm, receive the ſacrament, pay tithes, and give an alms now and then; you think that you are ſafe, and truſt in yourſelves that you are righteous, and inwardly deſpiſe thoſe, who do not come up to you in theſe outward duties? this, I am perſuaded, is the caſe of many of you, though, alas! it is a deſperate one, as I ſhall endeavour to ſhew at the cloſe of this diſcourſe.

Let us now take a view of the Publican, ver. 13. "And the Publican ſtanding afar off, would not lift up ſo much as his eyes unto heaven, but ſmote upon his breaſt, ſaying, GOD be merciful to me a ſinner."

"The Publican ſtanding afar off:" Perhaps in the outward court of the temple, conſcious to himſelf that he was not worthy to approach the Holy of holies; ſo conſcious and ſo weighed down with a ſenſe of his own unworthineſs, that he would not ſo much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, which he knew was GOD's throne. Poor heart! what did he feel at this time! none but returning Publicans, like himſelf, can tell. Methinks I ſee him ſtanding afar off, penſive, oppreſſed, and even overwhelmed with ſorrow; ſometimes he attempts to look up; but then, thinks he, the heavens are unclean in GOD's ſight, and the very angels are charged with folly; how then ſhall ſuch a wretch as I dare to lift up my guilty head! And to ſhew that his heart was full of holy ſelf-reſentment, and that he ſorrowed after a godly ſort, he ſmote upon his breaſt; the word in the original implies, that he *ſtruck hard* upon his breaſt: he will lay the blame upon none but his own wicked heart. He will not, like unhumbled *Adam*, tacitly lay the fault of his vileneſs upon GOD, and ſay, The paſſions which thou gaveſt me, they deceived me, and I ſinned: he is too penitent thus to reproach his Maker; he ſmites upon his breaſt, his treacherous, ungrateful, deſperately wicked breaſt; a breaſt now ready to burſt: and at length, out of the abundance of his heart, I doubt not, with many tears, he at laſt cries out, "GOD be merciful to me a ſinner." Not, GOD be merciful to yonder proud Phariſee: he found enough in himſelf to vent his reſentment againſt, without looking abroad upon others. Not, GOD be merciful to me a ſaint; for he knew

knew "all his righteouſneſſes were but filthy rags." Not, God be merciful to ſuch or ſuch a one; but, God be merciful to me, even to me a ſinner, a ſinner by birth, a ſinner in thought, word, and deed; a ſinner as to my perſon, a ſinner as to all my performances; a ſinner in whom is no health, in whom dwelleth no good thing; a ſinner, poor, miſerable, blind and naked, from the crown of the head to the ſole of the feet, full of wounds, and bruiſes, and putrifying ſores; a ſelf-accuſed, ſelf-condemned ſinner. What think you? would this Publican have been offended if any miniſter had told him that he deſerved to be damned? would he have been angry, if any one had told him, that by nature he was half a devil and half a beaſt? No: he would have confeſſed a thouſand hells to have been his due, and that he was an earthly, deviliſh ſinner. He felt now what a dreadful thing it was to depart from the living God: he felt that he was inexcuſable every way; that he could in nowiſe, upon account of any thing in himſelf, be juſtified in the ſight of God; and therefore lays himſelf at the feet of ſovereign mercy, "God be merciful to me a ſinner." Here is no confidence in the fleſh, no plea fetched from faſting, paying tithes, or the performance of any other duty; here is no boaſting that he was not an extortioner, unjuſt, or an adulterer. Perhaps he had been guilty of all theſe crimes, at leaſt he knew he would have been guilty of all theſe, had he been left to follow the devices and deſires of his own heart; and therefore, with a broken and contrite ſpirit, he cries out, "God be merciful to me a ſinner."

This man came up to the temple to pray, and he prayed indeed. And a broken and contrite heart God will not deſpiſe. "I tell you," ſays our Lord, I who lay in the boſom of the Father from all eternity; I who am God, and therefore know all things; I who can neither deceive, nor be deceived, whoſe judgment is according to right; I tell you, whatever you may think of it, or think of me for telling you ſo, "this man," this Publican, this deſpiſed, ſinful, but broken-hearted man, "went down to his houſe juſtified (acquitted, and looked upon as righteous in the ſight of God) rather than the other."

Let Phariſees take heed that they do not pervert this text: for when it is ſaid, "This man went down to his houſe juſtified

ified rather than the other," our LORD does not mean that both were juſtified, and that the Publican had rather more juſtification than the Phariſee: but it implies, either that the Publican was actually juſtified, but the Phariſee was not; or, that the Publican was in a better way to receive juſtification, than the Phariſee; according to our LORD's ſaying, "The Publicans and Harlots enter into the kingdom of heaven before you." That the Phariſee was not juſtified is certain, for "GOD reſiſteth the proud;" and that the Publican was at this time actually juſtified (and perhaps went home with a ſenſe of it in his heart) we have great reaſon to infer from the latter part of the text, "For every one that exalteth himſelf ſhall be abaſed, and he that humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted."

The parable therefore now ſpeaks to all who hear me this day: for that our LORD intended it for our learning, is evident, from his making ſuch a general application; "For every one that exalteth himſelf ſhall be abaſed, and he that humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted."

The parable of the Publican and Phariſee, is but as it were a glaſs, wherein we may ſee the different diſpoſition of all mankind; for all mankind may be divided into two general claſſes. Either they truſt wholly in themſelves, or in part, that they are righteous, and then they are Phariſees; or they have no confidence in the fleſh, are ſelf-condemned ſinners, and then they come under the character of the Publican juſt now deſcribed. And we may add alſo, that the different reception theſe men met with, points out to us in lively colours, the different treatment the ſelf-juſticiary and ſelf-condemned criminal will meet with at the terrible day of judgment: "Every one that exalts himſelf ſhall be abaſed, but he that humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted."

"Every one," without exception, young or old, high or low, rich or poor (for GOD is no reſpecter of perſons) "every one," whoſoever he be, that exalteth himſelf, and not free-grace; every one that truſteth in himſelf that he is righteous, that reſts in his duties, or thinks to join them with the righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST, for juſtification in the ſight of GOD, though he be no adulterer, no extortioner, though he be not outwardly unjuſt, nay, though he faſt twice in the week,

week, and gives tithes of all that he poſſeſſes; yet ſhall he be abaſed in the ſight of all good men who know him here, and before men and angels, and GOD himſelf, when JESUS CHRIST comes to appear in judgment hereafter. How low, none but the almighty GOD can tell. He ſhall be abaſed to live with devils, and make his abode in the loweſt hell for evermore.

Hear this, all ye ſelf-juſticiaries, tremble, and behold your doom! a dreadful doom, more dreadful than words can expreſs, or thought conceive! If you refuſe to humble yourſelves, after hearing this parable, I call heaven and earth to witneſs againſt you this day, that GOD ſhall viſit you with all his ſtorms, and pour all the vials of his wrath upon your rebellious heads; you exalted yourſelves here, and GOD ſhall abaſe you hereafter; you are as proud as the devil, and with devils ſhall you dwell to all eternity. "Be not deceived, GOD is not mocked;" he ſees your hearts, he knows all things. And, notwithſtanding you may come up to the temple to pray, your prayers are turned into ſin, and you go down to your houſes unjuſtified, if you are ſelf-juſticiaries; and do you know what it is to be unjuſtified? why, if you are unjuſtified, the wrath of GOD abideth upon you; you are in your blood; all the curſes of the law belong to you: curſed are you when you go out, curſed are you when you come in; curſed are your thoughts, curſed are your words, curſed are your deeds; every thing you do, ſay, or think, from morning to night, is only one continued ſeries of ſin. However highly you may be eſteemed in the ſight of men, however you may be honoured with the uppermoſt ſeats in the ſynagogues, in the church militant, you will have no place in the church triumphant. "Humble yourſelves therefore under the mighty hand of GOD:" pull down every ſelf-righteous thought, and every proud imagination, that now exalteth itſelf againſt the perfect, perſonal, imputed righteouſneſs of the dear LORD JESUS: "For he (and he alone) that humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted."

He that humbleth himſelf, whatever he be: if, inſtead of faſting twice in the week, he has been drunk twice in the week; if, inſtead of giving tithes of all that he poſſeſſes, he has cheated the miniſter of his tithes, and the king of his taxes; notwithſtanding he be unjuſt, an extortioner, an adulterer,

terer, nay, notwithſtanding the ſins of all mankind center and unite in him; yet, if through grace, like the Publican, he is enabled to humble himſelf, he ſhall be exalted; not in a temporal manner; for chriſtians muſt rather expect to be abaſed, and to have their names caſt out as evil, and to lay down their lives for CHRIST JESUS in this world: but he ſhall be exalted in a ſpiritual ſenſe; he ſhall be freely juſtified from all his ſins by the blood of JESUS; he ſhall have peace with GOD, a peace which paſſeth all underſtanding; not only peace, but joy in believing; he ſhall be tranſlated from the kingdom of Satan, to the kingdom of GOD's dear Son: he ſhall dwell in CHRIST, and CHRIST in him: he ſhall be one with CHRIST, and CHRIST one with him: he ſhall drink of divine pleaſures, as out of a river: he ſhall be ſanctified throughout in ſpirit, ſoul and body; in one word, he ſhall be filled with all the fulneſs of GOD. Thus ſhall the man that humbleth himſelf be exalted here; but O, how high ſhall he be exalted hereafter! as high as the higheſt heavens, even to the right-hand of GOD: there he ſhall ſit, happy both in ſoul and body, and judge angels; high, out of the reach of all ſin and trouble, eternally ſecure from all danger of falling. O ſinners, did you but know how highly GOD intends to exalt thoſe who humble themſelves, and believe in JESUS, ſurely you would humble yourſelves, at leaſt beg of GOD to humble you; for it is he that muſt ſtrike the rock of your hearts, and cauſe floods of contrite tears to flow therefrom. O that GOD would give this ſermon ſuch a commiſſion, as he once gave to the rod of *Moſes!* I would ſtrike you through and through with the rod of his word, until each of you was brought to cry out with the poor Publican, "GOD be merciful to me a ſinner." What pleaſant language would this be in the ears of the LORD of Sabbaoth!

Are there no poor ſinners among you? what, are you all Phariſees? Surely, you cannot bear the thoughts of returning home unjuſtified; can you? what if a fit of the apoplexy ſhould ſeize you, and your ſouls be hurried away before the awful Judge of quick and dead? what will you do without CHRIST's righteouſneſs? if you go out of the world unjuſtified, you muſt remain ſo for ever. O that you would humble yourſelves! then would the LORD exalt you; it may be, that, whilſt I am

ſpeaking,

ſpeaking, the LORD might juſtify you freely by his grace. I obſerved, that perhaps the Publican had a ſenſe of his juſtification before he went from the temple, and knew that his pardon was ſealed in heaven: and who knows but you may be thus exalted before you go home, if you humble yourſelves? O what peace, love and joy, would you then feel in your hearts! you would have a heaven upon earth. O that I could hear any of you ſay (as I once heard a poor ſinner, under my preaching, cry out) *He is come, He is come!* How would you then, like him, extol a precious, a free-hearted CHRIST! how would you magnify him for being ſuch a friend to Publicans and ſinners? greater love can no man ſhew, than to lay down his life for a friend; but CHRIST laid down his life for his enemies, even for you, if you are enabled to humble yourſelves, as the Publican did. Sinners, I know not how to leave off talking with you; I would fill my mouth with arguments; I would plead with you. "Come, let us reaſon together;" though your ſins be as ſcarlet, yet, if you humble yourſelves, they ſhall be as white as ſnow. One act of true faith in CHRIST, juſtifies you for ever and ever; he has not promiſed you what he cannot perform; he is able to exalt you; for GOD hath exalted, and given him a name above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee ſhall bow; nay, GOD hath exalted him to be not only a Prince, but a Saviour. May he be a Saviour to you! and then I ſhall have reaſon to rejoice in the day of judgment, that I have not preached in vain, nor laboured in vain.

SERMON

SERMON XXXV.

The Converſion of *Zaccheus.*

LUKE xix. 9, 10.

And JESUS *ſaid unto him, This day is ſalvation come to this houſe; foraſmuch as he alſo is the Son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.*

SALVATION, every where through the whole ſcripture, is ſaid to be the free gift of GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. Not only free, becauſe GOD is a ſovereign agent, and therefore may withhold it from, or confer it on, whom he pleaſeth; but free, becauſe there is nothing to be found in man, that can any way induce GOD to be merciful unto him. The righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST is the whole cauſe of our finding favour in GOD's ſight: this righteouſneſs apprehended by faith (which is alſo the gift of GOD) makes it our own; and this faith, if true, will work by love.

Theſe are parts of thoſe glad tidings which are publiſhed in the goſpel; and of the certainty of them, next to the expreſs word of GOD, the experience of all ſuch as have been ſaved, is the beſt, and, as I take it, the moſt undoubted proof. That GOD might teach us every way, he has been pleaſed to leave upon record many inſtances of the power of his grace exerted in the ſalvation of ſeveral perſons, that we, hearing how he dealt with them, might from thence infer the manner we muſt expect to be dealt with ourſelves, and learn in what way we muſt look for ſalvation, if we truly deſire to be made partakers of the inheritance with the ſaints in light.

The converſion of the perſon referred to in the text, I think, will be of no ſmall ſervice to us in this matter, if

rightly improved. I would hope, moſt of you know who t
perſon is, to whom the LORD JESUS ſpeaks; it is the pub
can *Zaccheus*, to whoſe houſe the bleſſed JESUS ſaid, ſalvati
came, and whom he pronounces a Son of *Abraham*.

It is my deſign (GOD helping) to make ſome remarks upo
his converſion recorded at large in the preceding verſes, a
then to inforce the latter part of the text, as an encourag
ment to poor undone ſinners to come to JESUS CHRIS
"For the Son of man is come, to ſeek and to ſave that whi
was loſt."

The evangeliſt *Luke* introduces the account of this mar
converſion thus, verſe 1. "And JESUS entered and paſſ
through *Jericho*." The holy JESUS made it his buſineſs
go about doing good. As the ſun in the firmament is con
nually ſpreading his benign, quickening, and cheering infl
ences over the natural; ſo the Son of righteouſneſs ariſe wi
healing under his wings, and was daily and hourly diffuſi
his gracious influences over the moral world. The precedi
chapter acquaints us of a notable miracle wrought by the L
JESUS, on poor blind *Bartimeus*; and in this, a greater p
ſents itſelf to our conſideration. The evangeliſt would ha
us take particular notice of it; for he introduces it with t
word "behold:" "and behold, there was a man named Z
cheus, who was the chief among the *Publicans*, and he
rich."

Well might the evangeliſt uſher in the relation of th
man's converſion with the word "behold!" For, accordi
to human judgment, how many unſurmountable obſtac
lay in the way of it! Surely no one will ſay there was
fitneſs in *Zaccheus* for ſalvation; for we are told that he
a *Publican*, and therefore in all probability a notorious ſinn
The *Publicans* were gatherers of the *Roman* taxes; they w
infamous for their abominable extortion; their very na
therefore became ſo odious, that we find the *Phariſees* of
reproached our LORD, as very wicked, becauſe he was
friend unto and ſat down to meat with them. *Zaccheus* th
being a *Publican*, was no doubt a ſinner; and, being ch
among the *Publicans*, conſequently was chief among ſinne
Nay, "he was rich." One inſpired apoſtle has told us, t
"not many mighty, not many noble are called." Anot

faith, "God has chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith." And he who was the Maker and Redeemer of the apostles, assures us, "that it is easier for a camel, (or cable-rope) to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." Let not therefore the rich glory in the multitude of their riches.

But rich as he was, we are told, verse 3. that "he sought to see JESUS." A wonder indeed! The common people heard our LORD gladly, and the poor received the gospel. The multitude, the ὀχλος, the mob, the people that knew not the law, as the proud high-priests called them, used to follow him on foot into the country, and sometimes staid with him three days together to hear him preach: But did the rich believe or attend on him? No! Our LORD preached up the doctrine of the cross; he preached too searching for them, and therefore they counted him their enemy, persecuted and spoke all manner of evil against him falsly. Let not the ministers of CHRIST marvel, if they meet with the like treatment from the rich men of this wicked and adulterous generation. I should think it no scandal (supposing it true) to hear it affirmed, that none but the poor attended my ministry. Their souls are as precious to our LORD JESUS CHRIST, as the souls of the greatest men. They were the poor that attended him in the days of his flesh: these are they whom he hath chosen to be rich in faith, and to be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Were the rich in this world's goods generally to speak well of me, woe be unto me; I should think it a dreadful sign that I was only a wolf in sheep's clothing; that I spoke peace, peace, when there was no peace, and prophesied smoother things than the gospel would allow of. Hear ye this, O ye rich. Let who will dare to do it; GOD forbid that I should despise the poor; in doing so, I should reproach my Maker. The poor are dear to my soul; I rejoice to see them fly to the doctrine of CHRIST, like the doves to their windows. I only pray, that the poor who attend, may be evangelized, and turned into the spirit of the gospel: if so, "blessed are ye; for yours is the kingdom of heaven."

But we must return to *Zacchæus*. "He sought to see JESUS." That is good news. I heartily wish I could say, it was out of a good principle: but, without speaking contrary to that

charity which hopes and believeth all things for the beſt, we may ſay, that the ſame principle drew him after CHRIST, which now draws multitudes (to ſpeak plainly, it may be multitudes of you) to hear a particular preacher, even curioſity: for we are told, that he came not to hear his doctrine, but to view his perſon, or, to uſe the words of the evangeliſt, "to ſee who he was." Our LORD's fame was now ſpread abroad through all *Jeruſalem*, and all the country round about: ſome ſaid he was a good man; others, "Nay, but he deceiveth the people." And therefore curioſity drew out this rich Publican *Zaccheus*, to ſee who this perſon was, of whom he had heard ſuch various accounts. But it ſeems he could not conveniently get a ſight of him for the preſs, and becauſe he was little of ſtature. Alas! how many are kept from ſeeing CHRIST in glory, by reaſon of the preſs! I mean, how many are aſhamed of being ſingularly good, and therefore follow a multitude to do evil, becauſe they have a preſs or throng of polite acquaintance! And, for fear of being ſet at nought by thoſe with whom they uſed to ſit at meat, they deny the LORD of glory, and are aſhamed to confeſs him before men. This baſe, this ſervile fear of man, is the bane of true chriſtianity; it brings a dreadful ſnare upon the ſoul, and is the ruin of ten thouſands: for I am fully perſuaded, numbers are rationally convicted of goſpel-truths; but, not being able to brook contempt, they will not proſecute their convictions, nor reduce them to practice. Happy thoſe, who in this reſpect, like *Zaccheus*, are reſolved to overcome all impediments that lie in their way to a ſight of CHRIST: for, finding he could not ſee CHRIST becauſe of the preſs and the littleneſs of his natural ſtature, he did not ſmite upon his breaſt, and depart, ſaying, "It is in vain to ſeek after a ſight of him any longer, I can never attain unto it." No, finding he could not ſee CHRIST, if he continued in the midſt of, "he ran before the multitude, and climbed up into a ſycamore-tree, to ſee him; for he was to paſs that way."

There is no ſeeing CHRIST in Glory, unleſs we run before the multitude, and are willing to be in the number of thoſe deſpiſed few, who take the kingdom of GOD by violence. The broad way, in which ſo many go, can never be that ſtrait and narrow way which leads to life. Our LORD's flock

was,

was, and always will be, comparatively a little one: and unless we dare to run before the multitude in a holy singularity, and can rejoice in being accounted fools for CHRIST's sake, we shall never see JESUS with comfort, when he appears in glory. From mentioning the sycamore-tree, and considering the difficulty with which *Zacchæus* must climb it, we may farther learn, that those who would see CHRIST, must undergo other difficulties and hardships, besides contempt. *Zaccheus*, without doubt, went through both. Did not many, think you, laugh at him as he ran along, and in the language of *Michal, Saul's* daughter, cry out, "How glorious did the rich *Zacchæus* look to-day, when, forgetting the greatness of his station, he ran before a pitiful, giddy mob, and climbed up a sycamore-tree, to see an enthusiastic preacher!" But *Zaccheus* cares not for all that; his curiosity was strong: if he could but see who JESUS was, he did not value what scoffers said of him. Thus, and much more will it be with all those who have an effectual desire to see JESUS in heaven: they will go on from strength to strength, break through every difficulty lying in their way, and care not what men or devils say of or do unto them. May the LORD make us all thus minded, for his dear Son's sake!

At length, after taking much pains, and going (as we may suppose) through much contempt, *Zaccheus* has climbed the tree, and there he sits, as he thinks, hid in the leaves of it, and watching when he should see JESUS pass by: "For he was to pass by that way."

But hold, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth! Praise, magnify, and adore sovereign, electing, free, preventing love; Jesus the everlasting GOD, the Prince of peace, who saw *Nathanael* under the fig-tree, and *Zaccheus* from eternity, now sees him in the sycamore-tree, and calls him in time.

Verse 5. "And when JESUS came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, *Zaccheus*, make haste and come down; for this day I must abide at thy house." Amazing love! Well might *Luke* usher in the account with "Behold!" It is worthy of our highest admiration. When *Zaccheus* thought of no such thing, nay, thought that CHRIST JESUS did not know him; behold, CHRIST does what we never hear he did before or after, I mean, invite himself to

the houſe of *Zaccheus*, ſaying, "*Zaccheus*, make haſte and come down; for this day I muſt abide at thy houſe." Not pray let me abide, but I muſt abide this day at thy houſe. He alſo calls him by name, as though he was well acquainted with him: and indeed well he might; for his name was written in the book of life, he was one of thoſe whom the Father had given him from all eternity: therefore he muſt abide at his houſe that day. "For whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo called."

Here then, as through a glaſs, we may ſee the doctrine of free grace evidently exemplified before us. Here was no fitneſs in *Zaccheus*. He was a Publican, chief among the Publicans; not only ſo, but rich, and came to ſee CHRIST only out of curioſity: but ſovereign grace triumphs over all. And if we do GOD juſtice, and are effectually wrought upon, we muſt acknowledge there was no more fitneſs in us than in *Zaccheus*; and, had not CHRIST prevented us by his call, we had remained dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and alienated from the divine life, even as others. "JESUS looked up, and ſaw him, and ſaid unto him, *Zaccheus*, make haſte and come down; for this day I muſt abide at thy houſe."

With what different emotions of heart may we ſuppoſe *Zaccheus* received this invitation? Think you not that he was ſurpriſed to hear JESUS CHRIST call him by name, and not only ſo, but invite himſelf to his houſe? Surely, thinks *Zaccheus*, I dream: it cannot be; how ſhould he know me? I never ſaw him before: beſides, I ſhall undergo much contempt, if I receive him under my roof. Thus, I ſay, we may ſuppoſe *Zaccheus* thought within himſelf. But what ſaith the ſcripture? "I will make a willing people in the day of my power." With this outward call, there went an efficacious power from GOD, which ſweetly over-ruled his natural will: and therefore, verſe 6. "He made haſte, and came down, and received him joyfully;" not only into his houſe, but alſo into his heart.

Thus it is the great GOD brings home his children. He calls them by name, by his word or providence; he ſpeaks to them alſo by his ſpirit. Hereby they are enabled to open their hearts, and are made willing to receive the King of glory. For *Zaccheus*'s ſake, let us not entirely condemn people that come

came under the word, out of no better principle than curiosity. Who knows but GOD may call them? It is good to be where the LORD is passing by. May all who are now present out of this principle, hear the voice of the Son of GOD speaking to their souls, and so hear that they may live! Not that men ought therefore to take encouragement to come out of curiosity. For perhaps a thousand more, at other times, came to see CHRIST out of curiosity, as well as *Zacchæus*, who were not effectually called by his grace. I only mention this for the encouragement of my own soul, and the consolation of GOD's children, who are too apt to be angry with those who do not attend on the word out of love to GOD: but let them alone. Brethren, pray for them. How do you know but JESUS CHRIST may speak to their hearts? A few words from CHRIST, applied by his spirit, will save their souls. "*Zacchæus*, says CHRIST, make haste and come down. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully."

I have observed, in holy scripture, how particularly it is remarked, that persons rejoiced upon believing in CHRIST. Thus the converted Eunuch went on his way rejoicing; thus the Jaylor rejoiced with his whole house; thus *Zacchæus* received CHRIST joyfully. And well may those rejoice who receive JESUS CHRIST; for with him they receive righteousness, sanctification, and eternal redemption. Many have brought up an ill report upon our good land, and would fain persuade people that religion will make them melancholy mad. So far from it, that joy is one ingredient of the kingdom of GOD in the heart of a believer; "The kingdom of GOD is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." To rejoice in the LORD, is a gospel-duty. "Rejoice in the LORD always, and again I say, rejoice." And who can be so joyful, as those who know that their pardon is sealed before they go hence and are no more seen? The godly may; but I cannot see how any ungodly men can, rejoice: they cannot be truly cheerful. What if wicked men may sometimes have laughter amongst them? It is only the laughter of fools; in the midst of it there is heaviness: At the best, it is but like the crackling of thorns under a pot; it makes a blaze, but soon goes out. But as for the godly, it is not so with them; their joy

reſtitution. Go ye cheating Publicans, learn of *Zaccheus* ; go away and do likewiſe. If you do not make reſtitution here, the LORD JESUS ſhall make you confeſs your ſins before men and angels, and condemn you for it, when he comes in the glory of his Father to judgment hereafter.

After all this, with good reaſon might our LORD ſay unto him, "This day is ſalvation come to this houſe; foraſmuch as he alſo is the Son of *Abraham*;" not ſo much by a natural as by a ſpiritual birth. He was made partaker of like precious faith with *Abraham*: like *Abraham* he believed on the LORD, and it was accounted to him for righteouſneſs: his faith, like *Abraham*'s, worked by love; and I doubt not, but he has been long ſince ſitting in *Abraham*'s harbour.

And now, are you not aſhamed of yourſelves, who ſpeak againſt the doctrines of grace, eſpecially that doctrine of being juſtified by faith alone, as though it leaded to licentiouſneſs? What can be more unjuſt than ſuch a charge? Is not the inſtance of *Zaccheus*, a ſufficient proof to the contrary? Have I ſtrained it to ſerve my own turn? GOD forbid. To the beſt of my knowledge I have ſpoken the truth in ſincerity, and the truth as it is in JESUS. I do affirm that we are ſaved by grace, and that we are juſtified by faith alone: but I do alſo affirm, that faith muſt be evidenced by good works, where there is an opportunity of performing them.

What therefore has been ſaid of *Zaccheus*, may ſerve as a rule, whereby all may judge whether they have faith or not. You ſay you have faith; but how do you prove it? Did you ever hear the LORD JESUS call you by name? Were you ever made to obey that call? Did you ever, like *Zaccheus*, receive JESUS CHRIST joyfully into your hearts? Are you influenced by the faith you ſay you have, to ſtand up and confeſs the LORD JESUS before men? Were you ever made willing to own, and humble yourſelves for, your paſt offences? Does your faith work by love, ſo that you conſcientiouſly lay up, according as GOD has proſpered you, for the ſupport of the poor? Do you give alms of all things that you poſſeſs? And have you made due reſtitution to thoſe you have wronged? If ſo, happy are ye; ſalvation is come to your ſouls, you are ſons, you are daughters of, you ſhall ſhortly be everlaſtingly bleſſed with, faithful *Abraham*. But, if you are not thus minded, do not

deceive

deceive your own ſouls. Though you may talk of juſtification by faith, like angels, it will do you no good; it will only increaſe your damnation. You hold the truth, but it is in unrighteouſneſs: your faith being without works, is dead: you have the devil, not *Abraham*, for your father. Unleſs you get a faith of the heart, a faith working by love, with devils and damned ſpirits ſhall you dwell for evermore.

But it is time now to enforce the latter part of the text; "For the Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt." Theſe words are ſpoken by our Saviour in anſwer to ſome ſelf-righteous Phariſees, who, inſtead of rejoicing with the angels in heaven, at the converſion of ſuch a ſinner, murmured, "That he was gone to be a gueſt with a man that was a ſinner." To vindicate his conduct, he tells them, that this was an act agreeable to the deſign of his coming: "For the Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt." He might have ſaid, the Son of GOD. But O the wonderful condeſcenſion of our Redeemer! He delights to ſtile himſelf the Son of man. He came not only to ſave, but *to ſeek* and to ſave that which was loſt. He came to *Jericho*, to ſeek and ſave *Zaccheus*; for otherwiſe *Zaccheus* would never have been ſaved by him. But from whence came he? Even from heaven, his dwelling-place, to this lower earth, this vale of tears, to ſeek and ſave that which was loſt; or all that feel themſelves loſt, and are willing, like *Zaccheus*, to receive him into their hearts to ſave them; with how great a ſalvation? Even from the guilt, and alſo from the power of their ſins; to make them heirs of GOD, and joint heirs with himſelf, and partakers of that glory which he enjoyed with the Father before the world began. Thus will the Son of man ſave that which is loſt. He was made the ſon of man, on purpoſe that he might ſave them. He had no other end but this in leaving his Father's throne, in obeying the moral law, and hanging upon the croſs: all that was done and ſuffered, merely to ſatisfy, and procure a righteouſneſs for poor, loſt, undone ſinners, and that too without reſpect of perſons. "That which was loſt;" all of every nation and language, that feel, bewail, and are truly deſirous of being delivered from their loſt ſtate, did the Son of man come down to ſeek and to ſave: for he is mighty, not only ſo, but willing, to ſave

to

to the uttermoſt all that come to GOD through him. He will in no wiſe caſt them out: for he is the ſame to-day, as he was yeſterday. He comes now to ſinners, as well as formerly; and, I hope, hath ſent me out this day to ſeek, and, under him, to bring home ſome of you, the loſt ſheep of the houſe of *Iſrael*.

What ſay you? Shall I go home rejoicing, ſaying, That many like ſheep have went aſtray, but they have now believed on JESUS CHRIST, and ſo returned home to the great Shepherd and Biſhop of their ſouls? If the LORD would be pleaſed thus to proſper my handy-work, I care not how many legaliſts and ſelf-righteous phariſees murmur againſt me, for offering ſalvation to the worſt of ſinners: for I know the Son of man came to ſeek and to ſave them; and the LORD JESUS will now be a gueſt to the worſt Publican, the vileſt ſinner that is amongſt you, if he does but believe on him. Make haſte then, O ſinners, make haſte, and come by faith to CHRIST. Then, this day, even this hour, nay, this moment, if you believe, JESUS CHRIST ſhall come and make his eternal abode in your hearts. Which of you is made willing to receive the King of glory? Which of you obeys his call, as *Zaccheus* did? Alas! why do you ſtand ſtill? How know you, whether JESUS CHRIST may ever call you again? Come then, poor, guilty ſinners; come away, poor, loſt, undone publicans: make haſte, I ſay, and come away to JESUS CHRIST. The LORD condeſcends to invite himſelf to come under the filthy roofs of the houſes of your ſouls. Do not be afraid of entertaining him; he will fill you with all peace and joy in believing. Do not be aſhamed to run before the multitude, and to have all manner of evil ſpoke againſt you falſly for his ſake: one ſight of CHRIST will make amends for all. *Zaccheus* was laughed at; and all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhall ſuffer perſecution. But what of that? *Zaccheus* is now crowned in glory; as you alſo ſhall ſhortly be, if you believe on, and are reproached for CHRIST's ſake. Do not, therefore, put me off with frivolous excuſes: there's no excuſe can be given for your not coming to CHRIST. You are loſt, undone, without him; and if he is not glorified in your ſalvation, he will be glorified in your deſtruction; if he does not come and make his abode in your hearts, you muſt

take

e up an eternal abode with the devil and his angels. O that
: LORD would be pleaſed to paſs by ſome of you at this
ie! O that he may call you by his Spirit, and make you a
ling people in this day of his power! For I know thy
ling will not do, unleſs he, by his efficacious grace, compel
1 to come in. O that you once felt what it is to receive
sus CHRIST into your hearts! You would ſoon, like *Zac-*
us, give him every thing. You do not love CHRIST, be-
ſe you do not know him; you do not come to him, becauſe
1 do not feel your want of him: you are whole, and not
ken hearted; you are not ſick, at leaſt not ſenſible of
ur ſickneſs; and, therefore, no wonder you do not apply to
sus CHRIST, that great, that almighty phyſician. You
not feel yourſelves loſt, and therefore do not ſeek to be
nd in CHRIST. O that GOD would wound you with the
ord of his Spirit, and cauſe his arrows of conviction to
:k deep in your hearts! O that he would dart a ray of
ine light into your ſouls! For if you do not feel yourſelves
t without CHRIST, you are of all men moſt miſerable:
ur ſouls are dead; you are not only an image of hell, but
ſome degree hell itſelf: you carry hell about with you,
d you know it not. O that I could ſee ſome of you ſen-
le of this, and hear you cry out, "LORD, break this
rd heart; LORD, deliver me from the body of this death;
w me, LORD, make me willing to come after thee; I am
t; LORD, ſave me, or I periſh!" Was this your caſe,
w ſoon would the LORD ſtretch forth his almighty hand,
d ſay, Be of good cheer, it is I; be not afraid? What a
nderful calm would then poſſeſs your troubled ſouls! Your
lowſhip would then be with the Father and the Son: your
e would be hid with CHRIST in GOD.

Some of you, I hope, have experienced this, and can ſay, I
is loſt, but I am found; I was dead, but am alive again:
e Son of man came and ſought me in the day of his power,
d ſaved my ſinful ſoul. And do you repent that you came
CHRIST? Has he not been a good maſter? Is not his
eſence ſweet to your ſouls? Has he not been faithful to his
omiſe? And have you not found, that even in doing and
ffering for him, there is an exceeding preſent great reward?
m perſuaded you will anſwer, Yes. O then, ye ſaints, re-

commend

commend and talk of the love of CHRIST to others, and tell them, O tell them what great things the LORD has done for you! This may encourage others to come unto him. And who knows but the LORD may make you fishers of men? The story of *Zaccheus* was left on record for this purpose. No truly convicted soul, after such an instance of divine grace has been laid before him, need despair of mercy. What if you are Publicans? Was not *Zaccheus* a Publican? What if you are chief among the Publicans? Was not *Zaccheus* likewise? What if you are rich? Was not *Zaccheus* rich also? And yet almighty grace made him more than conqueror over all these hindrances. All things are possible to JESUS CHRIST; nothing is too hard for him: he is the LORD almighty. Our mountains of sins must all fall before this great *Zerubbabel*. On him GOD the Father has laid the iniquities of all that shall believe on him; and in his own body he bare them on the tree. There, there, by faith, O mourners in Sion, may you see your Saviour hanging with arms stretched out, and hear him, as it were, thus speaking to your souls; "Behold "how I have loved you! Behold my hands and my feet! "Look, look into my wounded side, and see a heart flaming "with love: love stronger than death. Come into my arms, "O sinners, come wash your spotted souls in my heart's "blood. See here is a fountain opened for all sin and all "uncleanness! See, O guilty souls, how the wrath of GOD "is now abiding upon you: come, haste away, and hide "yourselves in the clefts of my wounds; for I am wounded "for your transgressions; I am dying that you may live for "evermore. Behold, as *Moses* lifted up the serpent in the "wilderness, so am I here lifted up upon a tree. See how I "am become a curse for you: the chastisement of your peace "is upon me. I am thus scourged, thus wounded, thus cru-"cified, that you by my stripes may be healed. O look unto "me, all ye trembling sinners, even to the ends of the earth! "Look unto me by faith, and you shall be saved: for I came "thus to be obedient even unto death, that I might save that "which was lost."

And what say you to this, O sinners? Suppose you saw the King of glory dying, and thus speaking to you; would you believe on him? No, you would not, unless you believe

on

on him now: for though he is dead, he yet ſpeaketh all this in the ſcripture; nay, in effect, ſays all this in the words of the text, "The Son of man is come to ſeek and to ſave that which is loſt." Do not therefore any longer crucify the LORD of glory. Bring thoſe rebels, your ſins, which will not have him to reign over them, bring them out to him: though you cannot ſlay them yourſelves, yet he will ſlay them for you. The power of his death and reſurrection is as great now as formerly. Make haſte therefore, make haſte, O ye publicans and ſinners, and give the dear LORD JESUS your hearts, your whole hearts. If you refuſe to hearken to this call of the LORD, remember your damnation will be juſt: I am free from the blood of you all: you muſt acquit my Maſter and me at the terrible day of judgment. O that you may know the things that belong to your everlaſting peace, before they are eternally hid from your eyes! Let all that love the LORD JESUS CHRIST in ſincerity ſay, *Amen.*

SERMON

SERMON XXXVI.

The Marriage of *Cana*.

JOHN ii. 11.

This beginning of miracles did JESUS *in Cana of Galilee, and manifeſted forth his glory; and his diſciples believed on him.*

I Have more than once had occaſion to obſerve, that the chief end St. *John* had in view, when he wrote his goſpel, was to prove the divinity of JESUS CHRIST, [that WORD, who not only was from everlaſting with GOD, but alſo was really GOD bleſſed for evermore] againſt thoſe arch-heretics *Ebion* and *Corinthus*, whoſe pernicious principles too many follow in theſe laſt days. For this purpoſe, you may take notice, that he is more particular than any other Evangeliſt, in relating our LORD's divine diſcourſes, as alſo the glorious miracles which he wrought, not by a power derived from another, like *Moſes*, and other prophets, but from a power inherent in himſelf.

The words of the text have a reference to a notable miracle which CHRIST performed, and thereby gave proof of his eternal power and Godhead. "This beginning of miracles did JESUS in *Cana* of *Galilee*, and manifeſted forth his glory; and his diſciples believed on him."

The miracle here ſpoken of, is that of our LORD's turning water into wine at a marriage feaſt. I deſign, at preſent, by GOD's help, to make ſome obſervations on the circumſtances and certainty of the miracle, and then conclude with ſome practical inſtructions; that you, by hearing how JESUS CHRIST has ſhewed forth his glory, may, by the operation of GOD's Spirit upon your hearts, with the diſciples mentioned in the text, be brought to believe on him.

Firſt,

First, then, I would make ſome obſervations on the miracle itſelf.

Verſe 1 and 2. "And the third day there was a marriage in *Cana* of *Galilee*; and the mother of JESUS was there. And both JESUS was called, and his diſciples, to the marriage." By our LORD's being at a feaſt we may learn, that feaſting upon ſolemn occaſions is not abſolutely unlawful: but then we muſt be exceeding careful at ſuch ſeaſons, that the occaſion be ſolemn, and that we go not for the ſake of eating and drinking, but to edify one another in love. Feaſting in any other manner, I think abſolutely unlawful for the followers of JESUS CHRIST; becauſe if we eat and drink out of any other view, it cannot be to the glory of GOD. The Son of man, we know, "came eating and drinking." If a phariſee aſked him to come to his houſe, our LORD went, and ſat down with him. But then we find his diſcourſe was always ſuch as tended to the uſe of edifying. We may then, no doubt, go and do likewiſe.

We may obſerve farther, that if our LORD was preſent at a marriage feaſt, then, to deny marriage to any order of men, is certainly a "doctrine of devils." "Marriage (ſays the Apoſtle) is honourable in all." Our LORD graced a marriage feaſt with his firſt public miracle. It was an inſtitution of GOD himſelf, even in paradiſe: and therefore, no doubt, lawful for all chriſtians, even for thoſe who are made perfect in holineſs through the faith of JESUS CHRIST. But then, we may learn the reaſon why we have ſo many unhappy marriages in the world; it is becauſe the parties concerned do not call JESUS CHRIST by prayer, nor aſk the advice of his true diſciples when they are about to marry: No; CHRIST and religion are the laſt things that are conſulted: and no wonder then if matches of the devil's making (as all ſuch are, which are contracted only on account of outward beauty, or for any lucre's ſake) prove moſt miſerable, and grievous to be borne.

I cannot but dwell a little on this particular, becauſe I am perſuaded the devil cannot lay a greater ſnare for young chriſtians, than to tempt them unequally to yoke themſelves with unbelievers: as are all who are not born again of GOD. This was the ſnare wherein the ſons of GOD were entangled

before the flood, and one great cauſe why GOD brought that flood upon the world. For what ſays *Moſes*, *Gen.* vi. 2, 3. "The ſons of GOD (the poſterity of pious *Seth*) ſaw the daughters of men, (or the poſterity of wicked *Cain*) that they were fair, (not that they were pious) and they took them wives of all which they choſe:" not which GOD choſe for them. What follows? "And the LORD ſaid, My ſpirit ſhall not always ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh;" that is, even the few righteous ſouls being now grown carnal by their ungodly marriages, the whole world was altogether become abominable, and had made themſelves veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction. I might inſtance farther, the care the ancient patriarchs took to chuſe wives for their children out of their own religious families; and it was one great mark of *Eſau*'s rebellion againſt his father, that he took unto himſelf wives of the daughters of the *Canaanites*, who were ſtrangers to the covenant of promiſe made unto his fathers. But I forbear. Time will not permit me to enlarge here. Let it ſuffice to adviſe all, whenever they enter into a marriage ſtate, to imitate the people of *Cana* in *Galilee*, to call CHRIST to the marriage: He certainty will hear and chuſe for you; and you will always find his choice to be the beſt. He then will direct you to ſuch yoke-fellows as ſhall be helps meet for you in the great work of your ſalvation, and then he will alſo enable you to ſerve him without diſtraction, and cauſe you to walk, as *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, in all his commandments and ordinances blameleſs.

But to proceed. Who theſe perſons were that called our LORD and his diſciples to the marriage, is not certain. Some (becauſe it is ſaid, that the mother of JESUS was there) have ſuppoſed that they were related to the Virgin, and that therefore our LORD and his diſciples were invited on her account. However that be, it ſhould ſeem they were not very rich, (for what had rich folks to do with a deſpiſed JESUS of *Nazareth*, and his mean followers?) becauſe we find they were unfurniſhed with a ſufficient quantity of wine for a large company, and therefore, "when they wanted wine, the mother of JESUS," having, as it ſhould ſeem by her applying to him ſo readily on this occaſion, even in his private life, ſeen ſome inſtances of his miraculous power, "ſaith unto him, They have

have no wine." She thought it ſufficient only to inform him of the wants of the hoſt, knowing that he was as ready to give as ſhe to aſk. In this light the bleſſed Virgin's requeſt appears to us at the firſt view; but if we examine our LORD's anſwer, we ſhall have reaſon to think there was ſomething which was not right; for JESUS ſaith unto her, ver. 4. "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Obſerve, he calls her woman, not mother; to ſhew her, that though ſhe was his mother, as he was man, yet ſhe was his creature, as he was GOD. "What have I to do with thee?" Think you that I muſt work miracles at your bidding? Some have thought that ſhe ſpoke as though ſhe had an authority over him, which was a proud motion, and our LORD therefore checks her for it. And if JESUS CHRIST would not turn a little water into wine, whilſt he was here on earth, at her command, how idolatrous is that church, and how juſtly do we ſeparate from her, which preſcribes forms, wherein the Virgin is deſired to command her Son to have compaſſion on us!

But notwithſtanding the holy Virgin was blameable in this reſpect, yet ſhe hath herein ſet rich and poor an example which it is your duty to follow. You that are rich, and live in cieled houſes, learn of her to go into the cottages of the poor; your LORD was not above it, and why ſhould you? And when you do viſit them, like the virgin-mother, examine their wants; and when you ſee they have no wine, and are ready to periſh with hunger, ſhut not up your bowels of compaſſion, but bleſs the LORD for putting it in your power to adminiſter to their neceſſities. Believe me, ſuch viſits would do you good. You would learn then to be thankful that GOD has given you bread enough, and to ſpare. And I am perſuaded, every mite that you beſtow on feeding the hungry and cloathing the naked diſciples of JESUS CHRIST, will afford you more ſatisfaction at the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, than all the thouſands ſquandered away in balls and aſſemblies, and ſuch like entertainments.

You that are poor in this world's goods, and thereby are diſabled from helping, yet you may learn from the Virgin, to pray for one another. She could not turn the water into wine, but ſhe could entreat her ſon to do it: and ſo may you; and

doubt not of the LORD's hearing you; for GOD has chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith: and by your fervent prayers, you may draw down many a blessing on your poor fellow-creatures. O that I may ever be remembered by you before the throne of our dear LORD JESUS! But what shall we say? Will our LORD entirely disregard this motion of his mother? No; though he check her with, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" yet he intimates that he would do as she desired by-and-by: "Mine hour is not yet come." As though he had said, The wine is almost, but not quite out; when they are come to an extremity, and sensible of the want of my assistance, then will I shew forth my glory, that they may behold it, and believe on me.

Thus, Sirs, hath our LORD been frequently pleased to deal with me, and, I doubt not, with many of you also. Often, often when I have found his presence as it were hidden from my soul, and his comforts well nigh gone, I have went unto him complaining that I had no visit and token of his love, as usual. Sometimes he has seemed to turn a deaf ear to my request, and as it were said, "What have I to do with thee?" which has made me go sorrowing all the day long; so foolish was I, and faithless before him: for I have always found he loved me notwithstanding, as he did *Lazarus*, though he stayed two days after he heard he was sick. But when my hour of extremity has been come, and my will broken, then hath he lifted up the light of his blessed countenance afresh; he has shewed forth his glory, and made me ashamed for disbelieving him, who often hath turned my water into wine. Be not then discouraged, if the LORD does not immediately seem to regard the voice of your prayer, when you cry unto him. The holy Virgin we find was not; no, she was convinced his time was the best time, and therefore, verse 5. "saith unto the servants, (O that we could follow her advice!) whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."

And now, behold the hour is come, when the eternal Son of GOD will shew forth his glory. The circumstance of the miracle is very remarkable; ver. 6. "And there were set six water-pots of water, after the manner of the purifying of the *Jews*, containing two or three firkins a-piece." The manner of this purifying we have an account of in the other

Evangeliſts, eſpecially St. *Mark*, who informs us, that the phariſees, and all the *Jews*, except they waſh their hands oft, eat not; and when they come from the market, except they waſh they eat not. This was a ſuperſtitious cuſtom; but, however, we may learn from it, whenever we come in from converſing with thoſe that are without, to purify our hearts by ſelf-examination and prayer; for it is hard to go through the world, and to be kept unſpotted from it.

Obſerve further, verſe 7. "JESUS ſaith unto them," not to his own diſciples, but unto the ſervants of the houſe, who were ſtrangers to the holy JESUS, and whom the virgin had before charged to do whatſoever he ſaid unto them; "Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them to the brim. And he ſaith unto them, draw out now, and bear to the governor of the feaſt." And they bear it." How our LORD turned the water into wine we are not told. What have we to do with that? Why ſhould we deſire to be wiſe above what is written? It is ſufficient for the manifeſtation of his glorious godhead, that we are aſſured he did do it. For we are told, verſe 9, 10. "When the ruler of the feaſt had taſted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was (but the ſervants that drew the water knew) the governor of the feaſt called the bridegroom, and ſaith unto him, every man at the beginning doth ſet forth good wine, and when they have well drunk, that which is worſe; but thou haſt kept the good wine until now."

To explain this paſſage, you muſt obſerve, it was the cuſtom of the *Jews*, nay even of the heathens themſelves, (to the ſhame of our chriſtian baptized heathens be it ſpoken) at their public feaſts to chuſe a governor, who was to overſee and regulate the behaviour of the gueſts, and to take care that all things were carried on with decency and order. To this perſon then did the ſervants bear the wine; and we may judge how rich it was by his commendation of it, "Every man at the beginning, &c." Judge ye then, whether JESUS did not ſhew forth his glory, and whether you have not good reaſon, like the diſciples here mentioned, to believe on him?

Thus, my brethren, I have endeavoured to make ſome obſervations on the miracle itſelf. But alas! this is only the outward court thereof, the veil is yet before our eyes; turn

that aſide, and we ſhall ſee ſuch myſteries under it, as will make our hearts to dance for joy, and fill our mouths with praiſe for evermore!

But here I cannot help remarking what a ſad inference one of our maſters of *Iſrael*, in a printed ſermon, has lately drawn from this commendation of the bridegroom. His words are theſe. "Our bleſſed Saviour came eating and drinking, was preſent at weddings, and other entertainments, (though I hear of his being only at one;) nay, at one of them (which I ſuppoſe is that of which I am now diſcourſing) worked a miracle to make wine, when it is plain there had been more drank than was abſolutely neceſſary for the ſupport of nature, and conſequently ſomething had been indulged to pleaſure and chearfulneſs."*

I am ſorry ſuch words ſhould come from the mouth and pen of a dignified clergyman of the Church of *England*. Alas! how is ſhe fallen! or at leaſt, in what danger muſt her tottering ark be, when ſuch unhallowed hands are ſtretched out to ſupport it! Well may I bear patiently to be ſtiled a blaſphemer, and a ſetter forth of ſtrange doctrines, when my dear LORD JESUS is thus traduced; and when thoſe who pretend to preach in his name, urge this example to patronize licentiouſneſs and exceſs. It is true (as I obſerved at the beginning of this diſcourſe) our bleſſed Saviour did come eating and drinking; he was preſent at a wedding, and other entertainments; nay, at one of them worked a miracle to make wine, (you ſee I have been making ſome obſervations on it) but then it is not plain there had been more wine drank than was abſolutely neceſſary for the ſupport of nature; much leſs does it appear, that ſomething had been indulged to pleaſure and charfulneſs.

The governor does indeed ſay, "When men have well drunken," but it no where appears that they were the men. Is it to be ſuppoſed, that the moſt holy and unſpotted Lamb of GOD, who was manifeſted to deſtroy the works of the devil, and who, when at a Phariſee's houſe, took notice of even the geſtures of thoſe with whom he ſat at meat; is it to be ſuppoſed, that our dear Redeemer, whoſe conſtant practice it was to tell people they muſt deny themſelves, and take up

* See Dr. *Trap*'s ſermon againſt being righteous over-much, p. 17.

their

their croſſes daily; who bid his diſciples to take heed, leſt at any time their hearts might be over-charged with ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs; can it be ſuppoſed, that ſuch a ſelf-denying JESUS ſhould now turn ſix large water-pots of water into the richeſt wine, to encourage exceſs and drunkenneſs in perſons, who, according to this writer, had indulged to pleaſure and chearfulneſs already? Had our LORD ſat by, and ſeen them indulge, without telling them of it, would it not be a ſin? But to inſinuate he not only did this, but alſo turned water into wine, to increaſe that indulgence; this is making CHRIST a miniſter of ſin indeed. What is this, but uſing him like the Phariſees of old, who called him a glutton, and a wine-bibber? Alas! how may we expect our dear LORD's enemies will treat him, when he is thus wounded in the houſe of his ſeeming friends? Sirs, if you follow ſuch doctrine as this, you will not be righteous, but I am perſuaded you will be *wicked over-much*.

But GOD forbid you ſhould think our LORD behaved ſo much unlike himſelf in this matter. No, he had nobler ends in view, when he wrought this miracle. One, the evangeliſt mentions in the words of the text, "to ſhew forth his glory," or to give a proof of his eternal power and godhead.

Here ſeems to be an alluſion to the appearance of GOD in the tabernacle, which this ſame evangeliſt takes notice of in his firſt chapter, where he ſays, "The Word (JESUS CHRIST) was made fleſh, and dwelt (or, as it is rendered in the margin, tabernacled) amongſt us." Our dear LORD, though very GOD of very GOD, and alſo moſt perfect and glorious in himſelf as man, was pleaſed to throw a veil of fleſh over this his great glory, when he came to make his ſoul an offering for ſin. And that the world might know and believe in him as the Saviour of all men, he performed many miracles, and this in particular; for thus ſpeaks the evangeliſt, "This firſt," &c.

This then was the chief deſign of our LORD's turning the water into wine. But there are more which our LORD may be ſuppoſed to have had in view, ſome of which I ſhall proceed to mention.

Secondly, he might do this to reward the hoſt for calling him and his diſciples to the marriage. JESUS CHRIST will

not be behind-hand with thoſe who receive him or his followers, for his name's ſake. Thoſe who thus honour him, he will honour. A cup of cold water given in the name of a diſciple, ſhall in no wiſe loſe its reward. He will turn water into wine. Though thoſe who abound in alms-deeds, out of a true faith in, and love for JESUS, may ſeem as it were to throw their bread upon the waters, yet they ſhall find it again after many days. For they who give to the poor out of this principle, lend unto the LORD; and look, whatſoever they lay out, it ſhall be repaid them again. Even in this life, GOD often orders good meaſure preſſed down and running over, to be returned into his ſervants boſoms. It is the ſame in ſpirituals. To him that hath, and improves what he hath, for the ſake of CHRIST and his diſciples, ſhall be given, and he ſhall have abundance. Brethren, I would not boaſt; but, to my maſter's honour and free grace be it ſpoken, I can prove this to be true by happy experience. When I have conſidered that I am a child, and cannot ſpeak, and have ſeen ſo many of you come out into the wilderneſs to be fed, I have often ſaid within myſelf, what can I do with my little ſtock of grace and knowledge among ſo great a multitude? But, at my LORD's command, I have given you to eat of ſuch ſpiritual food as I had, and before I have done ſpeaking, have had my ſoul richly fed with the bread which cometh down from heaven. Thus ſhall it be done to all ſuch who are willing to ſpend and be ſpent for CHRIST or his diſciples; for there is no reſpect of perſons with GOD.

Thirdly, Our LORD's turning the water, which was poured out ſo plentifully, into wine, is a ſign of the plentiful pouring out of his Spirit into the hearts of believers. The holy Spirit is in ſcripture compared unto wine; and therefore the prophet calls us to buy wine as well as milk, that is, the ſpirit of love, which fills and gladdens the ſoul as it were with new wine. The apoſtle alludes to this, when he bids the *Epheſians* "not to be drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs, but be filled with the Spirit." And our LORD ſhews us thus much by chuſing wine, to ſhew forth the ſtrength and refreſhment of his blood, in the bleſſed ſacrament. I know theſe terms are unintelligible to natural men, they can no more underſtand me, than if I ſpake to them in an unknown tongue, for they are only to be ſpiritually diſcerned. To

you

You then that are ſpiritual do I ſpeak, to you who are juſtified by faith, and feel the bleſſed Spirit of JESUS CHRIST working upon your hearts, you can judge of what I ſay; you have already (I am perſuaded) been as it were filled with new wine by the inſpiration of his Holy Spirit. But alas! you have not yet had half your portion; theſe are only earneſts, and in compariſon but ſhadows of good things to come; our LORD keeps his beſt wine for you till the laſt; and though you have drank deep of it already, yet he intends to give you more: He will not leave you, 'till he has filled you to the brim, 'till you are ready to cry out, LORD, ſtay thine hand, thy poor creatures can hold no more! Be not ſtraitened in your own bowels, ſince JESUS CHRIST is not ſtraitened in his. Open your hearts as wide as ever you will, the Spirit of the LORD ſhall fill them. CHRIST deals with true believers, as *Elijah* did with the poor woman, whoſe oil increaſed, to pay her huſband's debts; as long as ſhe brought pitchers, the oil continued. It did not ceaſe till ſhe ceaſed bringing veſſels to contain it. My brethren, our hearts are like thoſe pitchers; open them freely by faith, and the oil of GOD's free gift, the oil of gladneſs, the love of GOD through CHRIST, ſhall be continually pouring in; for believers are to be filled with all the fulneſs of GOD.

Fourthly, Our LORD's turning water into wine, and keeping the beſt until laſt, may ſhew forth the glory of the latter days of his marriage feaſt with his church. Great things GOD has done already, whereat millions of ſaints have rejoiced, and do yet rejoice. Great things GOD is doing now, but yet, my brethren, we ſhall ſee greater things than theſe. It is meet, right, and our bounden duty, to give thanks unto GOD, even the Father; for many righteous men have deſired to ſee the things which we ſee, and have not ſeen them; and to hear the things which we hear, and have not heard them, But ſtill there are more excellent things behind. Glorious things are ſpoken of theſe times, "when the earth ſhall be filled with the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the ſea." There is a general expectation among the people of GOD, when the partition-wall between *Jew* and *Gentile* ſhall be broken down, and all *Iſrael* be ſaved. Happy thoſe who live when GOD does this. They ſhall ſee *Satan*, like lightning, fall from heaven. They ſhall not weep, as the *Jews* did at the building of the ſecond temple. No, they ſhall rejoice

joice with exceeding great joy. For all the former glory of the chriſtian church ſhall be nothing in compariſon of that glory which ſhall excel. Then ſhall they cry out with the governor of the feaſt, "thou haſt kept thy good wine until now!"

Fifthly, and laſtly, This ſhews us the happineſs of that bleſſed ſtate, when we ſhall all ſit together at the marriage ſupper of the Lamb, and drink of the new wine in his eternal and glorious kingdom!

The rewards which JESUS CHRIST confers on his faithful ſervants, and the comforts of his love wherewith he comforts them, whilſt pilgrims here on earth, are often ſo exceeding great, that was it not promiſed, it were almoſt preſumption for them to hope for any reward hereafter. But, my brethren, all the manifeſtations of GOD that we can poſſibly be favoured with here, when compared with the glory that is to be revealed in us, are no more than a drop of water when compared with an unbounded ocean. Though CHRIST frequently fills his ſaints even to the brim, yet their corruptible bodies weigh down their ſouls, and cauſe them to cry, "Who ſhall deliver us from theſe bodies of death?" Theſe earthly tabernacles can hold no more: But, bleſſed be GOD, theſe earthly tabernacles are to be diſſolved; this corruptible is to put on incorruption; this mortal is to put on immortality: and when GOD ſhall cauſe all his glory to paſs before us, then ſhall we cry out, LORD, thou haſt kept thy good wine until now. We have drank deeply of thy ſpirit; we have heard glorious things ſpoken of this thy city, O GOD! but we now find, that not the half, not the thouſandth part hath been told us. O the inviſible realities of the world of faith! Eye hath not ſeen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of the greateſt ſaint to conceive how CHRIST will ſhew forth his glory there! St. *Paul*, who was carried up into the third heavens, could give us little or no account of it. And well he might not—for he heard and ſaw ſuch things as is not poſſible for a man cloathed with fleſh and blood to utter. Whilſt I am thinking, and only ſpeaking of thoſe things unto you, I am almoſt carried beyond myſelf. Methinks, I now receive ſome little foretaſtes of that new wine which I hope to drink with you in the heavenly kingdom for ever and ever.

And

And wherefore do you think I have been ſaying theſe things? Many, perhaps, may be ready to ſay, To manifeſt thy own vain-glory. But it is a ſmall matter with me to be judged of man's judgment. He that judgeth me is the LORD. He knows that I have ſpoken of his miracle, only for the ſame end for which he at firſt performed it, and which I at firſt propoſed, that is, "to ſhew forth his glory," that you alſo may be brought to believe on him.

Did I come to preach myſelf, and not CHRIST JESUS my Lord, I would come to you, not in this plainneſs of ſpeech, but with the enticing words of man's wiſdom. Did I deſire to pleaſe natural men, I need not preach here in the wilderneſs. I hope my heart aims at nothing elſe, than what our LORD's great fore-runner aimed at, and which ought to be the buſineſs of every goſpel miniſter, that is, to point out to you the God-man CHRIST JESUS. "Behold then (by faith behold) the Lamb of GOD, who taketh away the ſins of the world." Look unto him, and be ſaved. You have heard how he manifeſted, and will yet manifeſt his glory to true believers; and why then, O ſinners, will you not believe in him? I ſay, O ſinners, for now I have ſpoken to the ſaints, I have many things to ſay to you. And may GOD give you all an hearing ear, and an obedient heart!

The LORD JESUS who ſhewed forth his glory above 1700 years ago, has made a marriage feaſt, and offers to eſpouſe all ſinners to himſelf, and to make them fleſh of his fleſh, and bone of his bone. He is willing to be united to you by one ſpirit. In every age, at ſundry times, and after divers manners, he hath ſent forth his ſervants, and they had bidden many, but yet, my brethren, there is room. The LORD therefore now has given a commiſſion in theſe laſt days to others of his ſervants, even to compel poor ſinners by the cords of love to come in. For our maſter's houſe muſt and ſhall be filled. He will not ſhed his precious blood in vain. Come then, come to the marriage. Let this be the day of your eſpouſals with JESUS CHRIST, he is willing to receive you, though other lords have had dominion over you. Come then to the marriage. Behold the oxen and fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; let me hear you ſay, as *Rebecca* did, when they aſked her, whether ſhe would go and

be a wife to *Iſaac*; O let me hear you ſay, we will come. Indeed you will not repent it. The LORD ſhall turn your water into wine. He ſhall fill your ſouls with marrow and fatneſs, and cauſe you to praiſe him with joyful lips.

Do not ſay, you are miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked, and therefore aſhamed to come, for it is to ſuch that this invitation is now ſent. The polite, the rich, the buſy, ſelf-righteous Phariſees of this generation have been bidden already, but they have rejected the counſel of GOD againſt themſelves. They are too deeply engaged in going, one to his country houſe, another to his merchandize. They are ſo deeply wedded to the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, that they, as it were with one conſent, have made excuſe. And though they have been often called in their own ſynagogues, yet all the return they make, is to thruſt us out, and thereby in effect ſay, they will not come. But GOD forbid, my brethren, that you ſhould learn of them; no, ſince our LORD condeſcends to call firſt, (becauſe if left to yourſelves you would never call after him) let me beſeech you to anſwer him, as he anſwered for you, when called upon by infinite offended juſtice to die for your ſins, "Lo! I come to do thy will, O GOD!" What if you are miſerable, and poor, and blind, and naked, that is no excuſe; faith is the only wedding garment which CHRIST requires; he does not call you becauſe you already are, but becauſe he intends to make you ſaints. It pities him to ſee you naked. He wants to cover you with his righteouſneſs. In ſhort, he deſires to ſhew forth his glory, that is, his free love through your faith in him. Not but that he will be glorified, whether you believe in him or not; for the infinitely free love of JESUS CHRIST will be ever the ſame, whether you believe it, and ſo receive it, or the contrary. But our LORD will not always ſend out his ſervants in vain, to call you; the time will come when he will ſay, None of thoſe which were bidden, and would not come, ſhall taſte of my ſupper. Our LORD is a GOD of juſtice, as well as of love; and if ſinners will not take hold of his golden ſceptre, verily he will bruiſe them with his iron rod. It is for your ſakes, O ſinners, and not his own, that he thus condeſcends to invite you: ſuffer him then to ſhew forth his glory, even the glory of the exceeding riches of his free grace, by believ-

ing

ing on him, "For we are ſaved by grace through faith." It was grace, free grace, that moved the Father ſo to love the world, as to "give his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life!" It was grace, that made the Son to come down and die. It was grace, free grace, that moved the Holy Ghoſt to undertake to ſanctify the elect people of GOD: and it was grace, free grace, that moved our LORD JESUS CHRIST to ſend forth his miniſters to call poor ſinners this day. Let me not then, my brethren, go without my errand. Why will you not believe in him? Will the devil do ſuch great and good things for you as CHRIST will? No indeed, he will not. Perhaps, he may give you to drink at firſt of a little brutiſh pleaſure; but what will he give you to drink at laſt? a cup of fury and of trembling; a never-dying worm, a ſelf-condemning conſcience, and the bitter pains of eternal death. But as for the ſervants of JESUS CHRIST, it is not ſo with them. No, he keeps his beſt wine till the laſt. And though he may cauſe you to drink of the brook in the way to heaven, and of the cup of affliction, yet he ſweetens it with a ſenſe of his goodneſs, and makes it pleaſant drink, ſuch as their ſouls do love. I appeal to the experience of any ſaint here preſent, (as I doubt not but there are many ſuch in this field) whether CHRIST has not proved faithful, ever ſince you have been eſpouſed to him? Has he not ſhewed forth his glory, ever ſince you have believed on him?

And now, ſinners, what have you to object? I ſee you are all ſilent, and well you may. For if you will not be drawn by the cords of infinite and everlaſting love, what will draw you? I could urge many terrors of the LORD to perſuade you; but if the love of JESUS CHRIST will not conſtrain you, your caſe is deſperate. Remember then this day I have invited all, even the worſt of ſinners, to be married to the LORD JESUS. If you periſh, remember you do not periſh for lack of invitation. You yourſelves ſhall ſtand forth at the laſt day, and I here give you a ſummons to meet me at the judgment ſeat of CHRIST, and to clear both my maſter and me. Would weeping, would tears prevail on you, I could wiſh my head were waters, and my eyes fountains of tears, that I might weep out every argument, and melt you into

love.

love. Would any thing I could do or ſuffer, influence your hearts, I think I could bear to pluck out my eyes, or even to lay down my life for your ſakes. Or was I ſure to prevail on you by importunity, I could continue my diſcourſe til midnight, I would wreſtle with you even till the morning watch, as *Jacob* did with the angel, and would not go away till I had overcome. But ſuch power belongeth only unto the LORD, I can only invite; it is He only can work in you both to will and to do after his good pleaſure; it is his property to take away the heart of ſtone, and give you a heart of fleſh; it is his ſpirit that muſt convince you of unbelief and of the everlaſting righteouſneſs of his dear Son; it is He alone muſt give faith to apply his righteouſneſs to your hearts it is He alone can give you a wedding garment, and bring you to ſit down and drink new wine in his kingdom. As to ſpirituals we are quite dead, and have no more power to turn to GOD of ourſelves, than *Lazarus* had to raiſe himſelf, after he had lain ſtinking in the grave four days. If thou canſt go, O man, and breathe upon all the dry bones that lye in the graves, and bid them live; if thou canſt take thy mantle and divide yonder river, as *Elijah* did the river *Jordan*; then will we believe thou haſt a power to turn to GOD of thyſelf: But as thou muſt deſpair of the one, ſo thou muſt deſpair of the other, without CHRIST's quickening grace; in him is thy only help; fly to him then by faith; ſay unto him, as the poor leper did, "LORD, if thou wilt," thou canſt make me willing; and he will ſtretch forth the right-hand of his power to aſſiſt and relieve you: He will ſweetly guide you by his wiſdom on earth, and afterwards take you up to partake of his glory in heaven.

To his mercy therefore, and Almighty protection, do I earneſtly, humbly, and moſt affectionately commit you; the LORD bleſs you and keep you; the LORD lift up the light of his bleſſed countenance upon you, and give you all peace and joy in believing, now and for evermore!

SERMON

SERMON XXXVII.

The Duty of ſearching the Scriptures.

JOHN v. 39.

Search the Scriptures.

WHEN the Sadducees came to our bleſſed LORD, and put to him the queſtion, "whoſe wife that woman ſhould be in the next life, who had ſeven huſbands in this," he told them "they erred, not knowing the ſcriptures." And if we would know whence all the errors, that have over-ſpread the church of CHRIST, firſt aroſe, we ſhould find that, in a great meaſure, they flowed from the ſame fountain, ignorance of the word of GOD.

Our bleſſed LORD, though he was the eternal GOD, yet as man, he made the ſcriptures his conſtant rule and guide. And therefore, when he was aſked by the lawyer, which was the great commandment of the law, he referred him to his Bible for an anſwer, "What readeſt thou?" And thus, when led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil, he repelled all his aſſaults, with "it is written."

A ſufficient confutation this, of their opinion, who ſay, "the Spirit only, and not the Spirit by the Word, is to be our rule of action." If ſo, our Saviour, who had the Spirit without meaſure, needed not always have referred to the written word.

But how few copy after the example of CHRIST? How many are there who do not regard the word of GOD at all, but throw the ſacred oracles aſide, as an antiquated book, fit only for illiterate men?

Such do greatly err, not knowing what the ſcriptures are, or for what they are deſigned.

I ſhall,

I ſhall, therefore,

Firſt, Shew, that it is every one's duty to ſearch them.

And, *Secondly*, Lay down ſome directions for you, to ſearch them with advantage.

I. I am to ſhew, that it is every perſon's duty to ſearch the Scriptures.

By the Scriptures, I underſtand the law and the prophets, and thoſe books which have in all ages been accounted canonical, and which make up that volume commmonly called the Bible.

Theſe are emphatically ſtiled the *Scriptures*, and, in one place, the "Scriptures of Truth," as though no other books deſerved the name of true writings or ſcripture in compariſon of them.

They are not of any private interpretation, authority, or invention, but holy men of old wrote them, as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.

The foundation of GOD's revealing himſelf thus to mankind, was our fall in *Adam*, and the neceſſity of our new birth in CHRIST JESUS. And if we ſearch the ſcriptures as we ought, we ſhall find the ſum and ſubſtance, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and end of them, is to lead us to a knowledge of theſe two great truths.

All the threats, promiſes and precepts, all the exhortations and doctrines contained therein, all the rites, ceremonies and ſacrifices appointed under the *Jewiſh* law; nay, almoſt all the hiſtorical parts of holy ſcripture, ſuppoſe our being fallen in *Adam*, and either point out to us a Mediator to come, or ſpeak of him as already come in the fleſh.

Had man continued in a ſtate of innocence, he would not have needed an outward revelation, becauſe the law of GOD was ſo deeply written in the tables of his heart. But having eaten the forbidden fruit, he incurred the diſpleaſure of GOD, and loſt the divine Image, and, therefore, without an external revelation, could never tell how GOD would be reconciled unto him, or how he ſhould be ſaved from the miſery and darkneſs of his fallen nature.

That theſe truths are ſo, I need not refer you to any other book, than your own hearts.

For unleſs we are fallen creatures, whence thoſe abominable corruptions which daily ariſe in our hearts? We could not come thus corrupt out of the hands of our Maker, becauſe he being goodneſs itſelf could make nothing but what is like himſelf, holy, juſt, and good. And that we want to be delivered from theſe diſorders of our nature, is evident, becauſe we find an unwillingneſs within ourſelves to own we are thus depraved, and are always ſtriving to appear to others of a quite different frame and temper of mind than what we are.

I appeal to the experience of the moſt learned diſputer againſt divine revelation, whether he does not find in himſelf, that he is naturally proud, angry, revengeful, and full of other paſſions contrary to the purity, holineſs, and long-ſuffering of GOD. And is not this a demonſtration that ſome way or other he is fallen from GOD? And I appeal alſo, whether at the ſame time that he finds theſe hurtful luſts in his heart, he does not ſtrive to ſeem amiable, courteous, kind, and affable; and is not this a manifeſt proof, that he is ſenſible he is miſerable, and wants, he knows not how, to be redeemed or delivered from it?

Here then, GOD by his word ſteps in, and opens to his view ſuch a ſcene of divine love, and infinite goodneſs in the holy ſcriptures, that none but men, of ſuch corrupt and reprobate minds as our modern deiſts, would ſhut their eyes againſt it.

What does GOD in his written word do more or leſs, than ſhew thee, O man, how thou art fallen into that blindneſs, darkneſs, and miſery, of which thou feeleſt and complaineſt? And, at the ſame time, he points out the way to what thou deſireſt, even how thou mayeſt be redeemed out of it by believing in, and copying after the Son of his love.

As I told you before, ſo I tell you again, upon theſe two truths reſt all divine revelation. It being given us for no other end, but to ſhew us our miſery, and our happineſs; our fall and recovery; or, in one word, after what manner we died in *Adam*, and how in CHRIST we may again be made alive.

Hence then ariſes the neceſſity of ſearching the ſcriptures for ſince they are nothing elſe but the grand charter of our ſalvation, the revelation of a covenant made by GOD with men in CHRIST, and a light to guide us into the way of peace; it follows, that all are obliged to read and ſearch them, becauſe all are equally fallen from GOD, all equally ſtand in need of being informed how they muſt be reſtored to and again united with him.

How fooliſhly then do the diſputing infidels of this generation act, who are continually either calling for ſigns from heaven, or ſeeking for outward evidence to prove the truth of divine revelation? Whereas, what they ſo earneſtly ſeek for is nigh unto, nay, within them. For let them but conſult their own hearts, they cannot but feel what they want. Let them but conſult the lively oracles of GOD, and they cannot but ſee a remedy revealed for all their wants, and that the written word does as exactly anſwer the wants and deſires of their hearts, as face anſwers to face in the water. Where then is the ſcribe, where is the wiſe, where is the ſolidity of the reaſoning of the diſputers of this world? Has not GOD revealed himſelf unto them, as plain as their own hearts could wiſh? And yet they require a ſign: but there ſhall no other ſign be given them. For if they believe not a revelation which is every way ſo ſuited to their wants, neither will they be perſuaded though one ſhould riſe from the dead.

But this diſcourſe is not deſigned ſo much for them that believe not, as for them, who both know and believe that the ſcriptures contain a revelation which came from GOD, and that it is their duty, as being chief parties concerned, not only to read but ſearch them alſo.

I paſs on, therefore, in the

Second place, to lay down ſome directions, how you may ſearch them with advantage.

Firſt, Have always in view, the end for which the ſcriptures were written, even to ſhew us the way of ſalvation, by JESUS CHRIST.

"Search the ſcriptures," ſays our bleſſed LORD, "for they are they that teſtify of me." Look, therefore, always for CHRIST in the ſcripture. He is the treaſure hid in the field

bot

both of the Old and New Teſtament. In the Old, you will find him under propheſies, types, ſacrifices, and ſhadows; in the New, manifeſted in the fleſh, to become a propitiation for our ſins as a Prieſt, and as a Prophet to reveal the whole will of his heavenly Father.

Have CHRIST, then, always in view when you are reading the word of GOD, and this, like the ſtar in the eaſt, will guide you to the Meſſiah, will ſerve as a key to every thing that is obſcure, and unlock to you the wiſdom and riches of all the myſteries of the kingdom of GOD.

Secondly, Search the ſcriptures with an humble child-like diſpoſition.

For whoſoever does not read them with this temper, ſhall in no wiſe enter into the knowledge of the things contained in them. For GOD hides the ſenſe of them, from thoſe that are wiſe and prudent in their own eyes, and reveals them only to babes in CHRIST: who think they know nothing yet as they ought to know; who hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, and humbly deſire to be fed with the ſincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby.

Fancy yourſelves, therefore, when you are ſearching the ſcriptures, eſpecially when you are reading the New Teſtament, to be with *Mary* ſitting at the feet of the holy JESUS; and be as willing to learn what GOD ſhall teach you, as *Samuel* was, when he ſaid, "Speak, LORD, for thy ſervant heareth."

Oh that the unbelievers would pull down every high thought and imagination that exalts itſelf againſt the revealed will of GOD! O that they would, like new-born babes, deſire to be fed with the pure milk of the word! then we ſhould have them no longer ſcoffing at Divine Revelation, nor would they read the Bible any more with the ſame intent the *Philiſtines* brought out *Sampſon*, to make ſport at it; but they would ſee the divine image and ſuperſcription written upon every line. They would hear GOD ſpeaking unto their ſouls by it, and, conſequently, be built up in the knowledge and fear of him, who is the Author thereof.

Thirdly, Search the ſcriptures, with a ſincere intention to put in practice what you read.

A deſire to do the will of GOD is the only way to know it; if any man will do my will, ſays JESUS CHRIST, "He ſhall know of my doctrine, whether it be of GOD, or whether I ſpeak of myſelf." As he alſo ſpeaks in another place to his diſciples, "To you, (who are willing to practiſe your duty) it is given to know the myſteries of the kingdom of GOD, but to thoſe that are without, (who only want to raiſe cavils againſt my doctrine) all theſe things are ſpoken in parables, that ſeeing they may ſee and not underſtand, and hearing they may hear and not perceive."

For it is but juſt in GOD to ſend thoſe ſtrong deluſions, that they may believe a lie, and to conceal the knowledge of himſelf from all ſuch as do not ſeek him with a ſingle intention.

JESUS CHRIST is the ſame now, as formerly, to thoſe who deſire to know from his word, who he is that they may believe on, and live by; and to him he will reveal himſelf as clearly as he did to the woman of *Samaria*, when he ſaid, "I that ſpeak to thee am he," or as he did to the man that was born blind, whom the *Jews* had caſt out for his name's ſake, "He that talketh with thee, is he." But to thoſe who conſult his word with a deſire neither to know him, nor keep his commandments, but either merely for their entertainment, or to ſcoff at the ſimplicity of the manner in which he is revealed, to thoſe, I ſay, he never will reveal himſelf, though they ſhould ſearch the ſcriptures to all eternity. As he never would tell thoſe whether he was the *Meſſiah* or not, who put that queſtion to him either out of curioſity, or that they might have whereof to accuſe him.

Fourthly, In order to ſearch the ſcriptures ſtill more effectually, make an application of every thing you read to your own hearts.

For whatever was written in the book of GOD, was written for our learning. And what CHRIST ſaid unto thoſe aforetime, we muſt look upon as ſpoken to us alſo: for ſince the holy ſcriptures are nothing but a revelation from GOD, how fallen man is to be reſtored by JESUS CHRIST: all the precepts, threats, and promiſes, belong to us and to our children, as well as to thoſe, to whom they were immediately made known.

Thus the Apoſtle, when he tells us that he lived by the faith of the Son of GOD, adds, "who died and gave himſelf for me." It is this application of JESUS CHRIST to our hearts, that makes his redemption effectual to each of us.

And it is this application of all the doctrinal and hiſtorical parts of ſcripture, when we are reading them over, that muſt render them profitable to us, as they were deſigned for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, and to make every child of GOD perfect, thoroughly furniſhed to every good work.

I dare appeal to the experience of every ſpiritual reader of holy writ, whether or not, if he conſulted the word of GOD in this manner, he was not at all times and at all ſeaſons, as plainly directed how to act, as though he had conſulted the Urim and Thummim, which was upon the high-prieſt's breaſt. For this is the way GOD now reveals himſelf to man; not by making new revelations, but by applying general things that are revealed already to every ſincere reader's heart.

And this, by the way, anſwers an objection made by thoſe who ſay, "The word of GOD is not a perfect rule of action, "because it cannot direct us how to act or how to determine "in particular caſes, or what place to go to, when we are in "doubt, and therefore, the Spirit, and not the word, is to "be our rule of action."

But this I deny, and affirm on the contrary, that GOD at all times, circumſtances, and places, though never ſo minute, never ſo particular, will, if we diligently ſeek the aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit, apply general things to our hearts, and thereby, to uſe the words of the holy JESUS, will lead us into all truth, and give us the particular aſſiſtance we want: But this leads me to a

Fifth direction how to ſearch the ſcriptures with profit: Labour to attain that Spirit by which they were written.

For the natural man diſcerneth not the words of the Spirit of GOD, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned; the words that CHRIST hath ſpoken, they are ſpirit, and they are life, and can be no more underſtood as to the true ſenſe and meaning of them, by the mere natural man, than a perſon who never had learned a language can underſtand another ſpeaking in it. The ſcriptures, therefore, have not unfitly been compared, by

ſome, to the cloud which went before the *Iſraelites*, they are dark and hard to be underſtood by the natural man, as the cloud appeared dark to the *Egyptians*; but they are light, they are life to chriſtians indeed, as that ſame cloud which ſeemed dark to *Pharaoh* and his houſe, appeared bright and altogether glorious to the *Iſrael* of GOD.

It was the want of the aſſiſtance of this Spirit, that made *Nicodemus*, a teacher of *Iſrael*, and a ruler of the *Jews*, ſo utterly ignorant in the doctrine of regeneration: for being only a natural man, he could not tell how that thing could be; it was the want of this Spirit that made our Saviour's diſciples, though he ſo frequently converſed with them, daily miſtake the nature of the doctrines he delivered; and it is becauſe the natural veil is not taken off from their hearts, that ſo many who now pretend to ſearch the ſcriptures, yet ſee no farther than into the bare letter of them, and continue entire ſtrangers to the ſpiritual meaning couched under every parable, and contained in almoſt all the precepts of the book of GOD.

Indeed, how ſhould it be otherwiſe, for GOD being a ſpirit, he cannot communicate himſelf any otherwiſe than in a ſpiritual manner to the hearts of men; and conſequently if we are ſtrangers to his Spirit, we muſt continue ſtrangers to his word, becauſe it is altogether like himſelf, ſpiritual. Labour, therefore, earneſtly for to attain this bleſſed Spirit; otherwiſe, your underſtandings will never be opened to underſtand the ſcriptures aright: and remember, prayer is one of the moſt immediate means to get this Holy Spirit. Therefore,

Sixthly, Let me adviſe you, before you read the ſcriptures, to pray, that CHRIST, according to his promiſe, would ſend his Spirit to guide you into all truth; interſperſe ſhort ejaculations whilſt you are engaged in reading; pray over every word and verſe, if poſſible; and when you cloſe up the book, moſt earneſtly beſeech GOD, that the words which you have read, may be inwardly engrafted into your hearts, and bring forth in you the fruits of a good life.

Do this, and you will, with a holy violence, draw down GOD's Holy Spirit into your hearts; you will experience his gracious influence, and feel him enlightening, quickening, and inflaming your ſouls by the word of GOD; you will then not only read, but mark, learn, and inwardly digeſt what you read:

read: and the word of GOD will be meat indeed, and drink indeed unto your ſouls; you then will be as *Apollos* was, powerful in the ſcriptures; be ſcribes ready inſtructed to the kingdom of GOD, and bring out of the good treaſures of your heart, things both from the Old and New Teſtament, to entertain all you converſe with. One

Direction more, which ſhall be the laſt, *Seventhly*, Read the ſcripture conſtantly, or, to uſe our Saviour's expreſſion in the text, "ſearch the ſcriptures;" dig in them as for hid treaſure; for here is a manifeſt alluſion to thoſe who dig in mines; and our Saviour would thereby teach us, that we muſt take as much pains in conſtantly reading his word, if we would grow wiſe thereby, as thoſe who dig for gold and ſilver. The ſcriptures contain the deep things of GOD, and therefore, can never be ſufficiently ſearched into by a careleſs, ſuperficial, curſory way of reading them, but by an induſtrious, cloſe, and humble application.

The Pſalmiſt makes it the characteriſtic of a good man, that he "meditates on GOD's law day and night." And "this book of the law, (ſays GOD to *Joſhua*) ſhall not go out of thy mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein day and night;" for then thou ſhalt make thy way proſperous, and thou ſhalt have good ſucceſs. Search, therefore, the ſcriptures, not only devoutly but daily, for in them are the words of eternal life; wait conſtantly at wiſdom's gate, and ſhe will then, and not till then, diſplay and lay open to you her heavenly treaſures. You that are rich, are without excuſe if you do not; and you that are poor, ought to take heed and improve that little time you have: for by the ſcriptures you are to be acquitted, and by the ſcriptures you are to be condemned at the laſt day.

But perhaps you have no taſte for this deſpiſed book; perhaps plays, romances, and books of polite entertainment, ſuit your taſte better: if this be your caſe, give me leave to tell you, your taſte is vitiated, and unleſs corrected by the Spirit and word of GOD, you ſhall never enter into his heavenly kingdom: for unleſs you delight in GOD here, how will you be made meet to dwell with him hereafter. Is it a ſin then, you will ſay, to read uſeleſs impertinent books; I anſwer, Yes: And that for the ſame reaſon, as it is a ſin to indulge uſeleſs

converſation, becauſe both immediately tend to grieve and quench that Spirit, by which alone we can be ſealed to the day of redemption. You may reply, How ſhall we know this? Why, put in practice the precept in the text; ſearch the ſcripture in the manner that has been recommended, and then you will be convinced of the danger, ſinfulneſs, and unſatisfactorineſs of reading any others than the book of GOD, or ſuch as are wrote in the ſame ſpirit. You will then ſay, when I was a child, and ignorant of the excellency of the word of GOD, I read what the world calls harmleſs books, as other children in knowledge, though old in years, have done, and ſtill do; but now I have taſted the good word of life, and am come to a more perfect knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD, I put away theſe childiſh, trifling things, and am determined to read no other books but what lead me to a knowledge of myſelf and of CHRIST JESUS.

Search, therefore, the ſcriptures, my dear brethren; taſte and ſee how good the word of GOD is, and then you will never leave that heavenly manna, that angel's food, to feed on dry huſks, that light bread, thoſe trifling, ſinful compoſitions, in which men of falſe taſte delight themſelves: no, you will then diſdain ſuch poor entertainment, and bluſh that yourſelves once were fond of it. The word of GOD will then be ſweeter to you than honey, and the honey-comb, and dearer than gold and ſilver; your ſouls by reading it, will be filled as it were, with marrow and fatneſs, and your hearts inſenſibly moulded into the ſpirit of its bleſſed Author. In ſhort, you will be guided by GOD's wiſdom here, and conducted by the light of his divine word into glory hereafter.

SERMON

SERMON XXXVIII.

The Indwelling of the Spirit, the common Privilege of all Believers.

JOHN vii. 37, 38, 39.

In the laſt day, that great day of the feaſt, JESUS *ſtood and cried, ſaying, If any man thirſt, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the ſcripture hath ſaid, out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water. But this ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive.*

NOTHING has rendered the croſs of CHRIST of leſs effect; nothing has been a greater ſtumbling-block and rock of offence to weak minds, than a ſuppoſition, now current among us, that moſt of what is contained in the goſpel of JESUS CHRIST, was deſigned only for our LORD's firſt and immediate followers, and conſequently calculated but for one or two hundred years. Accordingly, many now read the life, ſufferings, death, and reſurrection of JESUS CHRIST, in the ſame manner as *Cæſar's Commentaries*, or the *Conqueſts of Alexander* are read: as things rather intended to afford matter for ſpeculation, than to be acted over again in and by us.

As this is true of the doctrines of the goſpel in general, ſo it is of the operation of GOD's Spirit upon the hearts of believers in particular; for we no ſooner mention the neceſſity of our receiving the Holy Ghoſt in theſe laſt days, as well as formerly, but we are looked upon by ſome, as enthuſiaſts and madmen; and by others, repreſented as wilfully deceiving the people, and undermining the eſtabliſhed conſtitution of the church.

Judge

Judge ye then, whether it is not high time for the true miniſters of JESUS CHRIST, who have been made partakers of this heavenly gift, to lift up their voices like a trumpet; and if they would not have thoſe ſouls periſh, for which the LORD JESUS has ſhed his precious blood, to declare, with all boldneſs, that the Holy Spirit is the common privilege and portion of all believers in all ages; and that we as well as the firſt chriſtians, muſt receive the Holy Ghoſt, before we can be truly called the children of GOD.

For this reaſon, (and alſo that I might anſwer the deſign of our church in appointing the preſent feſtival *) I have choſen the words of the text.

They were ſpoken by JESUS CHRIST, when he was at the feaſt of tabernacles. Our LORD attended on the temple-ſervice in general, and the feſtivals of the *Jewiſh* church in particular. The feſtival at which he was now preſent, was that of the feaſt of tabernacles, which the *Jews* obſerved according to GOD's appointment in commemoration of their living in tents. At the laſt day of this feaſt, it was cuſtomary for many pious people to fetch water from a certain place, and bring it on their heads, ſinging this anthem out of *Iſaiah*, "And with joy ſhall they draw water out of the wells of ſalvation." Our LORD obſerving this, and it being his conſtant practice to ſpiritualize every thing he met with, cries out, "If any man thirſt, let him come unto me, (rather than unto that well) and drink. He that believeth on me, as the ſcripture hath ſpoken, (where it is ſaid, GOD will make water to ſpring out of a dry rock, and ſuch-like) out of his belly ſhall flow rivers of living water." And that we might know what our Saviour meant by this living water, the Evangeliſt immediately adds, "But this ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive."

The laſt words I ſhall chiefly inſiſt on in the enſuing diſcourſe: And

Firſt, I ſhall briefly ſhew, what is meant by the word *Spirit*.

Secondly, That this Spirit is the common privilege of all believers.

* Whitſuntide.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, I ſhall ſhew the reaſon on which this doctrine is founded. And

Laſtly, Conclude with a general exhortation to believe on JESUS CHRIST, whereby alone we can receive this Spirit.

Firſt, I am to ſhew, what is meant by the word *Spirit*.

By the Spirit, is evidently to be underſtood the Holy Ghoſt, the third perſon in the ever-bleſſed Trinity, conſubſtantial and co-eternnl with the Father and the Son, proceeding from, yet equal to them both. For, to uſe the words of our Church in this day's office, that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the ſame we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, without any difference or inequality.

Thus, ſays St. *John*, in his firſt epiſtle, chap. v. ver. 7. "There are three that bare record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghoſt, and theſe three are one." And our LORD, when he gave his Apoſtles commiſſion to go and teach all nations, commanded them to baptize in the name of the Holy Ghoſt, as well as of the Father and the Son. And St. *Peter*, *Acts* v. 3. ſaid to *Ananias*, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghoſt?" And ver. 4. he ſays, "Thou haſt not lied unto men, but unto GOD." From all which paſſages, it is plain, that the Holy Ghoſt, is truly and properly GOD, as well as the Father and the Son. This is an unſpeakable myſtery, but a myſtery of GOD's revealing, and, therefore, to be aſſented to with our whole hearts: ſeeing GOD is not a man that he ſhould lie, nor the ſon of man that he ſhould deceive. I proceed,

Secondly, To prove that the Holy Ghoſt is the common privilege of all believers.

But, here I would not be underſtood of ſo receiving the Holy Ghoſt, as to enable us to work miracles, or ſhew outward ſigns and wonders. I allow our adverſaries, that to pretend to be inſpired, in this ſenſe, is being wiſe above what is written. Perhaps it cannot be proved, that GOD ever interpoſed in this extraordinary manner, but when ſome new revelation was to be eſtabliſhed, as at the firſt ſettling of the

Moſaic and goſpel diſpenſation: and as for my own part, I cannot but ſuſpect the ſpirit of thoſe who inſiſt upon a repetition of ſuch miracles at this time. For the world being now become nominally chriſtian, (though, GOD knows, little of the power is left among us) there need not outward miracles, but only an inward co-operation of the Holy Spirit with the word, to prove that JESUS is the Meſſiah which was to come into the world.

Beſides, if it was poſſible for thee, O man, to have faith, ſo as to be able to remove mountains, or caſt out devils; nay, couldſt thou ſpeak with the tongue of men and angels, yea, and bid the ſun ſtand ſtill in the midſt of heaven; what would all theſe gifts of the Spirit avail thee, without being made partaker of his ſanctifying graces? *Saul* had the ſpirit of government for a while, ſo as to become another man, and yet probably was a caſt-away. And many, who caſt out devils in CHRIST's name, at the laſt will be diſowned by him. If, therefore, thou hadſt only the gifts, and was deſtitute of the graces of the Holy Ghoſt, they would only ſerve to lead thee with ſo much the more ſolemnity to hell.

Here then we join iſſue with our adverſaries, and will readily grant, that we are not in this ſenſe to be inſpired, as were our LORD's firſt Apoſtles. But unleſs men have eyes which ſee not, and ears that hear not, how can they read the latter part of the text, and not confeſs that the Holy Spirit, in another ſenſe, is the common privilege of all believers, even to the end of the world? "This ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him ſhould receive." Obſerve, he does not ſay, they that believe on him for one or two ages, but they that believe on him in general, or, at all times, and in all places. So that, unleſs we can prove, that St. *John* was under a deluſion when he wrote theſe words, we muſt believe that even we alſo, ſhall receive the Holy Ghoſt, if we believe on the LORD JESUS with our whole hearts.

Again, our LORD, juſt before his bitter paſſion, when he was about to offer up his ſoul an offering for the ſins of the elect world; when his heart was moſt enlarged, and he would undoubtedly demand the moſt excellent gift for his diſciples, prays, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they alſo may be one in us, I in them,

them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;" that is, that all his true followers might be united to him by his holy Spirit, by as real, vital, and myſtical an union, as there was between JESUS CHRIST and the Father. I ſay all his *true followers*; for it is evident, from our LORD's own words, that he had us, and all believers, in view, when he put up this prayer; "Neither pray I for theſe alone, but for them alſo which ſhall believe on me through their word;" ſo that, unleſs we treat our LORD as the high prieſts did, and count him a blaſphemer, we muſt confeſs, that all who believe in JESUS CHRIST, through the word, or miniſtration of his ſervants, are to be joined to JESUS CHRIST, by being made partakers of the Holy Spirit.

A great noiſe hath been made of late, about the word *enthuſiaſt*, and it has been caſt upon the preachers of the goſpel, as a term of reproach; but every chriſtian; in the proper ſenſe of the word, muſt be an enthuſiaſt; that is, muſt be inſpired of GOD, or have GOD, by his Spirit, in him. St. *Peter* tells us, "we have many great and precious promiſes, that we may be made partakers of the divine nature;" our LORD prays, "that we may be one, as the Father and he are one;" and our own church, in conformity to theſe texts of Scripture, in her excellent communion-office, tells us, that thoſe who receive the ſacrament worthily, "dwell in CHRIST, and CHRIST in them; that they are one with CHRIST, and CHRIST with them." And yet, chriſtians muſt have their names caſt out as evil, and miniſters in particular, muſt be looked upon as deceivers of the people, for affirming, that we muſt be really united to GOD, by receiving the Holy Ghoſt. Be aſtoniſhed, O heavens, at this!

Indeed, I will not ſay, all our letter-learned preachers deny this doctrine in expreſs words; but however, they do in effect; for they talk profeſſedly againſt inward feelings, and ſay, we may have GOD's Spirit without feeling it, which is in reality to deny the thing itſelf. And had I a mind to hinder the progreſs of the goſpel, and to eſtabliſh the kingdom of darkneſs, I would go about, telling people, they might have the Spirit of GOD, and yet not feel it.

But to return: When our LORD was about to aſcend to his Father and our Father, to his GOD and our GOD, he gave his

his apoſtles this commiſſion, "Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt." And accordingly, by authority of this commiſſion, we do teach and baptize in this, and every age of the church. And though we tranſlate the words, "baptizing them in the *name*;" yet, as the name of GOD, in the LORD's prayer, and ſeveral other places, ſignifies his nature, they might as well be tranſlated thus, "baptizing them into the *nature* of the Father, into the *nature* of the Son, and into the *nature* of the Holy Ghoſt." Conſequently, if we are all to be baptized into the nature of the Holy Ghoſt, before our baptiſm be effectual to ſalvation, it is evident, that we all muſt actually receive the Holy Ghoſt, and ere we can ſay, we truly believe in JESUS CHRIST. For no one can ſay, that JESUS is my LORD, but he that has thus received the Holy Ghoſt.

Numbers of other texts might be quoted to make this doctrine, if poſſible, ſtill more plain; but I am aſtoniſhed, that any who call themſelves members; much more, that many, who are preachers in the church of *England*, ſhould dare ſo much as to open their lips againſt it. And yet, with grief I ſpeak it, GOD is my Judge, perſons of the eſtabliſhed church ſeem more generally to be ignorant of it, than any diſſenters whatſoever.

But, my dear brethren, what have you been doing? how often have your hearts given your lips the lye? how often have you offered to GOD the ſacrifice of fools, and had your prayers turned into ſin, if you approve of, and uſe our church-liturgy, and yet deny the Holy Spirit to be the portion of all believers? In the daily abſolution, the miniſter exhorts the people to pray, that "GOD would grant them repentance, and his Holy Spirit;" in the Collect for *Chriſtmas-day*, we beſeech GOD, "that he would daily renew us by his Holy Spirit;" in the laſt week's Collect, we prayed that "we may evermore rejoice in the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt;" and in the concluding prayer, which we put up every day, we pray, not only that the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the love of GOD, but that "the fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt" may be with us all evermore.

But farther, a ſolemn ſeaſon, to ſome, is now approaching; I mean the *Ember-days*, at the end of which, all that are to

be

be ordained to the office of a deacon, are in the ſight of GOD, and in the preſence of the congregation, to declare, that "they truſt they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt, to take upon them that adminiſtration;" and to thoſe, who are to be ordained prieſts, the biſhop is to repeat theſe ſolemn words, "Receive thou the Holy Ghoſt, now committed unto thee, by the impoſition of our hands." And yet, O that I had no reaſon to ſpeak it, many that uſe our forms, and many who have witneſſed this good confeſſion, yet dare to both talk and preach againſt the neceſſity of receiving the Holy Ghoſt now; and not only ſo, but cry out againſt thoſe, who do inſiſt upon it, as madmen, enthuſiaſts, ſchiſmatics, and underminers of the eſtabliſhed conſtitution.

But you are the ſchiſmatics, you are the bane of the church of *England*, who are always crying out, "the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD;" and yet ſtarve the people out of our communion, by feeding them only with the dry huſks of dead morality, and not bringing out to them the fatted calf; I mean, the doctrines of the operations of the bleſſed Spirit of GOD. But here is the misfortune; many of us are not led by, and therefore no wonder that we cannot talk feelingly of, the Holy Ghoſt; we ſubſcribe to our articles, and make them ſerve for a key to get into church-preferment, and then preach contrary to thoſe very articles to which we have ſubſcribed. Far be it from me, to charge all the clergy with this hateful hypocriſy; no, bleſſed be GOD, there are ſome left among us, who dare maintain the doctrines of the Reformation, and preach the truth as it is in JESUS: But I ſpeak the truth in CHRIST, I lye not; the generality of the clergy are fallen from our articles, and do not ſpeak agreeable to them, or to the form of ſound words delivered in the Scriptures; wo be unto ſuch blind leaders of the blind! how can you eſcape the damnation of hell? It is not all your learning (falſely ſo called) it is not all your preferments can keep you from the juſt judgment of GOD. Yet a little while, and we ſhall all appear before the tribunal of CHRIST; there, there will I meet you; there JESUS CHRIST, the great Shepherd and Biſhop of ſouls, ſhall determine who are the falſe prophets, who are the wolves in ſheep's cloathing. Thoſe who

ſay, that we muſt now receive and feel the Holy Ghoſt, or thoſe who exclaim againſt it, as the doctrine of devils.

But I can no more; it is an unpleaſing taſk to cenſure any order of men, eſpecially thoſe who are in the miniſtry; nor would any thing excuſe it but neceſſity: that neceſſity which extorted from our LORD himſelf ſo many woes againſt the Scribes and Phariſees, the letter-learned rulers and teachers of the *Jewiſh* church; and ſurely, if I could bear to ſee people periſh for lack of knowledge, and yet be ſilent towards thoſe who keep from them the key of true knowledge, the very ſtones would cry out.

Would we reſtore the church to its primitive dignity, the only way is to live and preach the doctrine of CHRIST, and the articles to which we have ſubſcribed; then we ſhall find the number of diſſenters will daily decreaſe, and the church of *England* become the joy of the whole earth.

I am, in the *Third* place, to ſhew the reaſonableneſs of this doctrine.

I ſay, the reaſonableneſs of this doctrine; for however it may ſeem fooliſhneſs to the natural man, yet to thoſe, who have taſted of the good word of life, and have felt the power of the world to come, it will appear to be founded on the higheſt reaſon; and is capable, to thoſe who have eyes to ſee, even of a demonſtration; I ſay of demonſtration: for it ſtands on this ſelf-evident truth, that we are fallen creatures, or, to uſe the ſcripture-expreſſion, "have all died in *Adam*."

I know indeed, it is now no uncommon thing amongſt us, to deny the doctrine of original ſin, as well as the divinity of JESUS CHRIST; but it is incumbent on thoſe who deny it, firſt to diſprove the authority of the holy Scriptures; if thou canſt prove, thou unbeliever, that the book, which we call *The Bible*, does not contain the lively oracles of GOD; if thou canſt ſhew, that holy men of old, did not write this book, as they were inwardly moved by the Holy Ghoſt, then will we give up the doctrine of original ſin; but unleſs thou canſt do this, we muſt inſiſt upon it, that we are all conceived and born in ſin; if for no other, yet for this one reaſon, becauſe that GOD, who cannot lye, has told us ſo.

But what has light to do with darkneſs, or polite infidels with the Bible? Alas! as they are ſtrangers to the power, ſo they

hey are generally as great ſtrangers to the word of God. nd therefore, if we will preach to them, we muſt preach to nd from the heart: for talking in the language of ſcripture, o them, is but like talking in an unknown tongue. Tell me hen, O man, whoſoever thou art, that denieſt the doctrine of riginal ſin, if thy conſcience be not ſeared as with a hot ron! tell me, if thou doſt not find thyſelf, by nature, to be motly mixture of brute and devil? I know theſe terms will ir up the whole Phariſee in thy heart; but let not Satan urry thee hence; ſtop a little, and let us reaſon together; loſt thou not find, that by nature thou art prone to pride? therwiſe, wherefore art thou now offended? Again, doſt not hou find in thyſelf the ſeeds of malice, revenge, and all un- haritableneſs? and what are theſe but the very tempers of the evil? Again, do we not all by nature follow, and ſuffer our- elves to be led by our natural appetites, always looking down- wards, never looking upwards to that GOD, in whom we live, nove, and have our being? and what is this but the very na- ure of the beaſts that periſh? Out of thy own heart, therefore, will I oblige thee to confeſs, what an inſpired apoſtle has long ince told us, that "the whole world (by nature) lies in the wicked one;" we are no better than thoſe whom St. *Jude* calls 'brute beaſts;" for we have tempers in us all by nature, that rove to a demonſtration, that we are earthly, ſenſual, de- iliſh.

And this will ſerve as another argument, to prove the reality f the operations of the bleſſed Spirit on the hearts of believers, gainſt thoſe falſe profeſſors, who deny there is any ſuch thing s influences of the Holy Spirit, that may be felt. For if they ill grant that the devil worketh, and ſo as to be felt in the earts of the children of diſobedience (which they muſt grant, nleſs they will give an apoſtle the lye) where is the wonder at the good Spirit ſhould have the ſame power over thoſe who e truly obedient to the faith of JESUS CHRIST?

If it be true then, that we are all by nature, ſince the fall, mixture of brute and devil, it is evident, that we all muſt ceive the Holy Ghoſt, ere we can dwell with and enjoy OD.

When you read, how the prodigal, in the goſpel, was re- uced to ſo low a condition, as to eat huſks with ſwine, and

how *Nebuchadnezzar* was turned out, to graze with oxen; am confident, you pity their unhappy ſtate. And when ye hear, how JESUS CHRIST will ſay, at the laſt day, to all th are not born again of GOD, "Depart from me, ye curſe into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," c not your hearts ſhrink within you, with a ſecret horror? As if creatures, with only our degree of goodneſs, cannot be even the thoughts of dwelling with beaſts or devils, to whc nature we are ſo nearly allied, how do we imagine GOD, wh is infinite goodneſs, and purity itſelf, can dwell with us, whi we are partakers of both their natures? we might as well thin to reconcile heaven and hell.

When *Adam* had eaten the forbidden fruit, he fled and hi himſelf from GOD; why? becauſe he was naked; he wa alienated from the life of GOD, the due puniſhment of his di obedience. Now, we are all by nature naked and void of GOD as he was at that time, and conſequently, until we are changed renewed, and cloathed with a divine nature again, we muſt fl from GOD alſo.

Hence then appears the reaſonableneſs of our being oblige to receive the Spirit of GOD. It is founded on the doctrin of original ſin: and, therefore, you will always find, that thoſ who talk againſt feeling the operations of the Holy Ghoſt very rarely, or ſlightly at leaſt, mention our fall in *Adam* no, they refer St. *Paul*'s account of the depravity of unbe lievers, only to thoſe of old time. Whereas it is obvious, o the contrary, that we are all equally included under the guil and conſequences of our firſt parent's ſin, even as others; an to uſe the language of our own church-article, "bring int the world with us, a corruption, which renders us liable t GOD's wrath, and eternal damnation."

Should I preach to you any other doctrine, I ſhould wron my own ſoul; I ſhould be found a falſe witneſs towards Go and you; and he that preaches any other doctrine, howſoeve dignified and diſtinguiſhed, ſhall bear his puniſhment, whc ſoever he be.

From this plain reaſon then appears the neceſſity why w as well as the firſt apoſtles, in this ſenſe, muſt receive th Spirit of GOD.

F

For the great work of ſanctification, or making us holy, is particularly referred to the Holy Ghoſt; therefore, our LORD ſays, "Unleſs a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD."

JESUS CHRIST came down to ſave us, not only from the guilt, but alſo from the power of ſin: and however often we have repeated our creed, and told GOD we believe in the Holy Ghoſt, yet, if we have not believed in him, ſo as to be really united to JESUS CHRIST by him, we have no more concord with JESUS CHRIST than *Belial* himſelf.

And now, my brethren, what ſhall I ſay more? tell me, are not many of you offended at what has been ſaid already? do not ſome of you think, though I mean well, yet I have carried the point a little too far? are not others ready to cry out, if this be true, who then can be ſaved? is not this driving people into deſpair?

Yes, I ingenuouſly confeſs it is; but into what deſpair? a deſpair of mercy through CHRIST? no; GOD forbid; but a deſpair of living with GOD without receiving the Holy Ghoſt. And I would to GOD, that not only all you that hear me this day, but that the whole world was filled with this deſpair. Believe me, I have been doing no more than you allow your bodily phyſicians to do every day: if you have a wound, and are in earneſt about a cure, you bid the ſurgeon probe it to the very bottom; and ſhall not the phyſician of your ſouls be allowed the ſame freedom? What have I been doing but ſearching your natural wounds, that I might convince you of your danger, and put you upon applying to JESUS CHRIST for a remedy? Indeed I have dealt with you as gently as I could; and now I have wounded, I will attempt to heal you. For I was in the

Laſt place, to exhort you all to come to JESUS CHRIST by faith, whereby you, even you alſo, ſhall receive the Holy Ghoſt. "For this ſpake he of the Spirit, which they that *believe* on him ſhould receive."

This, this is what I long to come to. Hitherto I have been preaching only the law; but behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy. If I have wounded you, be not afraid; behold, I now bring a remedy for all your wounds. Notwithſtanding you are ſunk into the nature of the beaſt and devil, yet, if you

truly believe on JESUS CHRIST, you ſhall receive the quickening Spirit promiſed in the text, and be reſtored to the glorious liberties of the ſons of GOD; I ſay, if you believe on JESUS CHRIST. "For by faith we are ſaved; it is not of works, leſt any one ſhould boaſt." And, however ſome men may ſay, there is a fitneſs required in the creature, and that we muſt have a righteouſneſs of our own, before we can lay hold on the righteouſneſs of CHRIST; yet, if we believe the ſcripture, ſalvation is the free gift of GOD, in CHRIST JESUS our LORD; and whoſoever believeth on him with his whole heart, though his ſoul be as black as hell itſelf, ſhall receive the gift of the Holy Ghoſt. Behold then, I ſtand up, and cry out in this great day of the feaſt, let every one that thirſteth come unto JESUS CHRIST and drink. "He that believeth on him, out of his belly ſhall flow (not only ſtreams or rivulets, but whole) rivers of living water." This I ſpeak of the Spirit, which they that believe on JESUS ſhall certainly receive. For JESUS CHRIST is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever; he is the way, the truth, the reſurrection, and the life; "whoſoever believeth on him, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live." There is no reſpect of perſons with JESUS CHRIST; high and low, rich and poor, one with another, may come to him with an humble confidence, if they draw near by faith; from him we may all receive grace upon grace; for JESUS CHRIST is full of grace and truth, and ready to ſave to the uttermoſt all that by a true faith turn unto him. Indeed, the poor generally receive the goſpel, and "GOD has choſen the poor in this world, rich in faith." But though not many mighty, not many noble are called; and though it be eaſier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of GOD, yet, even to you that are rich, do I now freely offer ſalvation, by JESUS CHRIST, if you will renounce yourſelves, and come to JESUS CHRIST as poor ſinners; I ſay, as poor ſinners; for the "poor in ſpirit" are only ſo bleſſed, as to have a right to the kingdom of GOD. And JESUS CHRIST calls none to him, but thoſe who thirſt after his righteouſneſs, and feel themſelves weary, and heavy laden with the burden of their ſins. JESUS CHRIST juſtifies the ungodly; he came not to call the righteous, but ſinners to repentance.

Do not then ſay you are unworthy; for this is a faithful and true ſaying, and worthy of all men to be received, "that JESUS CHRIST came into the world to ſave ſinners;" and if you are the chief of ſinners, if you feel yourſelves ſuch, verily JESUS CHRIST came into the world chiefly to ſave you. When *Joſeph* was called out of the priſon-houſe to *Pharoah*'s court, we are told, that he ſtaid ſome time to prepare himſelf; but do you come with all your priſon cloaths about you; come poor, and miſerable, and blind, and naked, as you are, and GOD the Father ſhall receive you with open arms, as was the returning prodigal. He ſhall cover your nakedneſs with the beſt robe of his dear Son's righteouſneſs, ſhall ſeal you with the ſignet of his Spirit, and feed you with the fatted calf, even with the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt. O, let there then be joy in heaven over ſome of you, as believing; let me not go back to my Maſter, and ſay, LORD, they will not believe my report. Harden no longer your hearts, but open them wide, and let the King of glory enter in; believe me, I am willing to go to priſon or death for you; but I am not willing to go to heaven without you. The love of JESUS CHRIST conſtrains me to lift up my voice like a trumpet. My heart is now full; out of the abundance of the love which I have for your precious and immortal ſouls, my mouth now ſpeaketh; and I could now not only continue my diſcourſe until midnight, but I could ſpeak until I could ſpeak no more. And why ſhould I deſpair of any? no, I can deſpair of no one, when I conſider JESUS CHRIST has had mercy on ſuch a wretch as I am; but the free grace of CHRIST prevented me; he ſaw me in my blood, he paſſed by me, and ſaid unto me, Live; and the ſame grace which was ſufficient for me, is ſufficient for you alſo; behold, the ſame bleſſed Spirit is ready to breathe on all your dry bones, if you will believe on JESUS CHRIST, whom GOD has ſent; indeed, you can never believe on, or ſerve a better maſter, one that is more mighty, or more willing to ſave; I can ſay, the LORD CHRIST is gracious, his yoke is eaſy, his burden exceeding light; after you have ſerved him many years, like the ſervants under the law, was he willing to diſcharge you, you would ſay, we love our Maſter, and will not go from him. Come then, my guilty brethren, come and believe on the LORD that bought you with his precious blood; look up by faith;

and ſee him whom you have pierced; behold him bleeding, panting, dying! behold him with arms ſtretched out ready to receive you all; cry unto him as the penitent thief did, LORD, remember us now thou art in thy kingdom, and he ſhall ſay to your ſouls, ſhortly ſhall you be with me in paradiſe. For thoſe whom CHRIST juſtifies, them he alſo glorifies, even with that glory which he enjoyed with the Father, before the world began. Do not ſay, I have bought a piece of ground, and muſt needs go ſee it; or I have bought a yoke of oxen, and muſt needs go prove them; or I have married a wife, I am engaged in an eager purſuit after the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, and therefore cannot come. Do not fear having your name caſt out as evil, or being accounted a fool for CHRIST's ſake; yet a little while, and you ſhall ſhine like the ſtars in the firmament for ever. Only believe, and JESUS CHRIST ſhall be to you wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and eternal redemption; your bodies ſhall be faſhioned like unto his glorious body, and your ſouls be partakers of all the fulneſs of GOD.

Which GOD of his infinite mercy, &c.

SERMON

SERMON XXXIX.

The Reſurrection of *Lazarus*.

JOHN xi. 43, 44.

And when he had thus ſpoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth. And he that was dead, came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-cloaths: and his face was bound about with a napkin. JESUS *ſaith unto them, Looſe him, and let him go.*

WHEN JESUS CHRIST, the eternal Word, was pleaſed to make all things by the word of his power, his laſt works were the beſt. When he looked back upon, and beheld the firſt products of his almighty power, he pronounced them "good;" but when that laſt, that lovely creature man, was formed, he pronounced them "very good." So, the ſame JESUS, when he came to tabernacle among us, and to begin and carry on a new and ſecond creation, though all his works were miracles of wonder, and manifeſted forth the glory of his eternal Godhead, yet the nearer he came to the end of his public miniſtrations, the greater and more noble did the miracles which he wrought appear. The reſurrection of *Lazarus*, that is to be the ſubject of the following diſcourſe, I think, is a ſufficient proof of this. To an eye of ſenſe, it ſeems to be one of the greateſt, if not the very greateſt miracle of all which our bleſſed LORD performed. When our Saviour bid *John*'s diſciples go and tell their Maſter what things they had ſeen and heard, he commands them to inform him, that by his divine power "the dead were raiſed;" alluding no doubt to the Ruler's daughter, who was raiſed immediately after her deceaſe; and the Widow's ſon, who at the command of JESUS, roſe out of his coffin, as they were carrying his corpſe to the burial. Theſe were pregnant

 proofs,

proofs, that JESUS was indeed the Meſſiah that was to come into the world. But his raiſing of *Lazarus* from the dead after he had lain four days dead, and ſaw corruption, is ſtill, if poſſible, a greater miracle; and conſequently a ſtronger proof of his being the Anointed, the CHRIST of GOD. The evangeliſt *John* is very particular in giving us an account of this miracle; even ſo particular, as to ſpend a whole chapter in relating the circumſtances which preceded, attended, and followed after it. And as he was undoubtedly directed herein by the all-wiſe, unerring Spirit of GOD, does it not point out unto us, that this miracle, with all its reſpective circumſtances, calls for our particular and moſt ſerious meditation? It appears to me in this light; and therefore, as the LORD ſhall be pleaſed to aſſiſt, I ſhall go back to the beginning of this chapter, follow the evangeliſt ſtep by ſtep, and conſider the particulars of this wonderous miracle, make ſome practical obſervations as I go along, and conclude with ſome ſuitable inſtructions and exhortations, which will naturally ariſe from the body of the diſcourſe.

The evangeliſt in the firſt verſe, makes mention of the ſickneſs of *Lazarus*. "Now, a certain man was ſick, named *Lazarus* of *Bethany*, the town of *Mary*, and her ſiſter *Martha*." Some think theſe ſiſters were very wealthy, ſo as to own good part of the town, or, as the original word ſeems to imply, the village. But then it is probable the evangeliſt would have ſaid the town of *Lazarus*, eſtates uſually deſcending, as with us, in the male line: it means therefore no more, than that *Martha* and *Mary* lived in *Bethany*. The Holy Ghoſt pointing out to us hereby, that nothing makes a town ſo worthy of a gracious ſoul's remark or eſteem, as its having many of GOD's dear children for its inhabitants. *Bethany*, though a little place, is more famous becauſe it was the town of *Martha* and *Mary*, than if *Alexander* had fought in it one of his greateſt battles. Both theſe women loved JESUS in ſincerity, and were as good as they were great. But *Mary*, though the younger ſiſter, ſeems to be the moſt eminent: for the evangeliſt in the ſecond verſe, ſpeaks of her in a very diſtinguiſhing manner. "It was that *Mary*, (that never-to-be-forgotten *Mary*) which anointed the LORD with ointment (expenſive as it was) and wiped his feet, (after ſhe

had washed them with tears of love) with her hair, even the hair of her head. What notice is taken of this action! With what an eulogy, and in what a high ſtrain of commendation is it here ſpoken of? And ſuch are the honours of all GOD's ſaints. Though all our good works are not recorded as *Mary*'s are, yet GOD is not unmindful, that he ſhould forget our works of faith, and labours which have proceeded of love. Every tear we ſhed, every ſigh we fetch, every alms we give, though it be only a cup of cold water, are all recorded in the Lamb's book of remembrance, and ſhall be produced to our eternal honour, and rewarded with a reward of grace, though not of debt, at the great and terrible day of the LORD. "I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat, I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink, naked, and ye cloathed me, ſick and in priſon, and ye came unto me." What reaſon have we then to be "ſtedfaſt and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the LORD, foraſmuch as we are aſſured, that our labours will not be in vain or forgotten by the LORD!" It was that *Mary* that anointed the LORD with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair. And what follows? "Whoſe brother *Lazarus* was ſick." So that being related to CHRIST, or his diſciples, will not exempt perſons from ſickneſs. In this life, time and chance happen to all, only with this material difference, thoſe afflictions which harden the obſtinately impenitent, ſoften and purify the heart of a true believer. "My ſon, therefore deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the LORD (on one hand), nor faint when thou art rebuked of him (on the other): for whom the LORD loveth he chaſteneth, and ſcourgeth every ſon whom he receiveth."

JESUS loved *Lazarus*, and yet *Lazarus* was ſick. And what do his ſiſters do for him now he is ſick? No doubt they applied to a phyſician, for it is tempting GOD to neglect making uſe of means for the recovery of our health, when it is impaired. But then they were not guilty of *Aſa*'s crime, "who ſought to the phyſicians, but not to the LORD." No; they knew the moſt ſkilful preſcriptions would be of no effect, unleſs attended with a bleſſing from JESUS the Great and Almighty Phyſician; and therefore his ſiſters ſent unto him, probably at the beginning of their brother's illneſs. How unlike is their conduct, to that of the generality of people, eſpecially

eſpecially the rich and great! How unfaſhionable is it now-a-days for perſons to ſend to JESUS in behalf of their ſick relations! It is ſo very uncuſtomary, that in ſome places, if a miniſter be ſent for to a ſick perſon, it is a ſad ſymptom that the patient is almoſt paſt hopes of recovery. Thus did not *Martha* and her ſiſter *Mary*; they ſent unto JESUS, though he was now beyond *Jordan*, (chap. x. 40.) where he abode, or chiefly reſided, for ſome time. Hence it was that they knew where to ſend to him. But what kind of meſſage did they ſend? A very humble and ſuitable one. "LORD, Behold, he whom thou loveſt is ſick." They might have ſaid, LORD, he who loveth thee is ſick. But they knew, that our love was not worth mentioning, and that we love JESUS only becauſe he firſt loved us. Beſides, here is no preſcribing to our LORD what he ſhould do, or what means he ſhould make uſe of. They do not ſo much as ſay, We pray thee to come, or only ſpeak the word, and our ſick brother ſhall be reſtored. They ſimply tell JESUS the caſe, knowing it was ſufficient barely to lay it before an infinitely compaſſionate Redeemer, and leave it to him to act according to his own ſovereign good-will and pleaſure. "LORD, Behold he whom thou loveſt is ſick." Oh how ſweet is it when the ſoul is brought to this! And with what a holy confidence may we pray to, and intercede with the holy JESUS, when we have reaſon to hope, that thoſe we pray and intercede for, are lovers of, and are beloved of him! For his eyes are in a peculiar manner over the righteous, and his ears always open to their prayers. This was their meſſage, and it ſoon reached JESUS CHRIST. And how does he receive it? We are told, verſe 4. "When JESUS heard that, (that he whom he loved was ſick) He ſaid, this ſickneſs is not unto death, but unto the glory of GOD, that the Son of GOD may be glorified thereby." To whom theſe words were ſpoken is not certain. In all probability, JESUS ſpake them to the perſons that delivered *Martha*'s and *Mary*'s meſſage. And if ſo, it was no doubt a comfortable anſwer for the preſent, though it muſt afterwards puzzle them as well as the diſciples how to explain it, when they found that *Lazarus* was actually dead. "This ſickneſs is not unto death," not unto an abiding death, becauſe he intended to raiſe him again, ſoon after his deceaſe. It is like that expreſſion of our

LORD

Lord in St. *Mark*, "The damſel is not dead, but ſleepeth;" which muſt not be underſtood in a literal, but metaphorical ſenſe. And this and ſuch-like inſtances, ought to teach us to weigh carefully our bleſſed LORD's words, and to wait for an explication of them, by ſubſequent providences; otherwiſe we ſhall be in danger of miſapplying them, and thereby bring our ſouls into unſpeakable bondage. "This ſickneſs is not unto death, but unto the glory of GOD, that the Son of GOD may be glorified thereby." This is the end both of the afflictions and the deaths of GOD's people. By all that happens to them he will be glorified one way or another, and cauſe every thing to work together for their good. And who then but would be content to be ſick, or willing to ſubmit to death itſelf, if ſo be the Son of GOD may be glorified thereby? This anſwer, no doubt, proceeded from love. For we are told,

Verſe 5. that "JESUS loved *Martha* and her ſiſter, and *Lazarus*." Oh happy family! Three in it beloved of JESUS, with a peculiar, everlaſting love. "Very often it ſo happens, (to uſe the words of the pious Biſhop *Beveridge*) that there "is but one in a city, and two in a country of this ſtamp." But here are two ſiſters and a brother, all lovers of, and beloved by the glorious JESUS. What ſhall we ſay to theſe things? Why, that our Saviour's grace is free and ſovereign, and he may do what he will with his own. They who are thus ſo highly favoured as to have ſo many converted in one houſe, ought to be doubly thankful! Such a bleſſing have not all his ſaints. No; many, very many, go mourning over their perverſe and graceleſs relations all their lives long; and find, even to their dying day, that their greateſt foes are thoſe of their own houſhold. Surely theſe three relations lived a heaven upon earth. For what can they want, what could make them miſerable, who are aſſured of JESU's love? But ſurely if JESUS loves this dear little family, the next news one might think we ſhould hear, would be, that he went immediately and healed *Lazarus*; or at leaſt cured him at a diſtance. But inſtead of that, we are told, verſe 6. "When he had heard that he was ſick, he abode two days ſtill in the ſame place where he was." A ſtrange way this, in the eye of natural reaſon, of expreſſing love; but not ſo ſtrange in the

the eye of faith: for the LORD JESUS very often sheweth his love, by deferring to give immediate answers to our prayers. Hereby he tries our faith and patience, and exercises all our passive graces. We have a proof of this in the *Syrophenician* woman, upon whom the blessed JESUS frowned, and spake roughly to at first, only that he might afterwards turn unto her and say, "O woman, great is thy faith." Let not those then who believe, make too much haste; or immediately in their hearts repine against the LORD, because he may not answer their requests, in their own time and way. GOD's time and way is best. And we shall find it to be so in the end. *Martha* and *Mary* experienced the truth of this, though undoubtedly our LORD's seeming delay, to come and heal their brother, cost them great searchings of heart. But will the LORD JESUS forget his dear *Lazarus*, whom his soul loveth? "Can a woman forget her sucking child?" Indeed she may; but the LORD never faileth those that fear him. Neither is he slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness: for his very delays are answers. The vision is for an appointed time; in the end it will speak and not lie.

Though our LORD abode two days where he was, to try the faith of these sisters, yet after this, he said unto his disciples, verse 7. "Let us go into *Judea* again." With what a holy familiarity does JESUS converse with his dear children! Our Saviour seems to speak to his disciples, as though he was only their brother, and as it were upon a level with them: "Let us go into *Judea* again." How gently, according to what was predicted of him, does he lead those that are with young! JESUS very well knew the weakness of his disciples, and also what a dangerous place *Judea* was: how gradually therefore does he make known unto them, his design of going thither! And how does he admit his disciples to expostulate with him on this account! "Master, say they, the *Jews* of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again?" They were amazed at our LORD's boldness, and were ready to call it presumption; as we generally are prone to censure and condemn other zealous and enterprizing persons, as carrying matters too far; it may be for no other reason, if we examine the bottom of our hearts, but because they go before, and excel

excel ourſelves. The diſciples, no doubt, thought that they ſpoke out of love to their LORD; and aſſuredly they did; but what a deal of ſelf-love was there mixed and blended with it? They ſeem much concerned for their Maſter, but they were more concerned for themſelves. However JESUS overlooks their weakneſs, and mildly replies, verſe 9, and 10. "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he ſtumbleth not, becauſe he ſeeth the light of the world; but if any man walk in the night, he ſtumbleth, becauſe there is no light in him." As though our LORD had ſaid, My dear diſciples, I thank you for your care and concern for me. *Judea* is a dangerous place, and what you ſay of the treatment I met with from its inhabitants, is juſt and true: but be not afraid of going there upon my account. For as a man walketh ſafely twelve hours of the day, becauſe he walketh in the light: ſo as long as the time appointed by my Father for my public adminiſtration laſts, I ſhall be as ſecure from the hands of my enemies, as a man that walks in broad-day is ſecure from falling. But as a man ſtumbleth if he walketh in the night, ſo when the night of my paſſion cometh, then, but not till then, ſhall I be given up into the hands of my ſpiteful foes. Oh what comfort have theſe words, by the bleſſing of GOD, frequently brought to my ſoul! How may all CHRIST's miniſters ſtrengthen themſelves with this conſideration, that ſo long as GOD hath work for them to do, they are immortal! And if after our work is over, our LORD ſhould call us to lay down our lives for the brethren, and to ſeal the truth of our doctrine with our blood, it would certainly be the higheſt honour that can be put upon us. "To you it is given not only to believe, but alſo to ſuffer," ſays the apoſtle to the *Philippians*.

"Theſe things (the evangeliſt tells us, ver. 11.) ſaid JESUS, and after that, (to ſatisfy them that he was not going into *Judea* without a proper call) he ſaith unto them, Our friend *Lazarus* ſleepeth." Our friend. Amazing! For what is a friend? As one's own ſoul. How dear then, and near are true believers to the moſt adorable JESUS! "Our friend *Lazarus*." Still more amazing! Here is condeſcenſion, here is unparalleled familiarity indeed. And what of him? "He ſleepeth." A figurative way of expreſſion. For what is death

to the *lovers* of JESUS CHRIST, but a ſleep, and a refreſhing one too? Thus it is ſaid of *Stephen* when he died, that "he fell aſleep." CHRIST indeed died, but believers only ſleep. And "thoſe that ſleep in JESUS, (ſays the ſcripture) will GOD bring with him." "Our friend *Lazarus* ſleepeth." For though he be dead, I ſhall raiſe him from the grave ſo ſoon, that his dying will be only like a perſon's taking a ſhort ſleep. "Our friend *Lazarus* ſleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of ſleep." By this time, one would imagine, our LORD's diſciples ſhould have underſtood him: But how unwilling are we to believe any thing that we do not like. "Then ſaid his diſciples, LORD, if he ſleep he ſhall do well." Oh fearful, and ſlow of heart to believe! How fain would they excuſe themſelves from going into *Judea*, for fear of a few ſtones! By this way of talking, how do they in effect impeach their bleſſed Maſter's conduct, and under a pretence of preſerving his perſon, foſter, and as it were plead for their own (though perhaps undiſcerned) cowardice and unbelief? That charity, which hopeth and believeth all things for the beſt, teacheth us to judge thus favourably of them. For, "Howbeit JESUS ſpake of his death: they thought that he had ſpoken of taking reſt in ſleep." The great and compaſſionate High-prieſt knowing and remembering they were but duſt, throws a veil of love over their infirmity; and at length, verſe 14. "Saith unto them plainly (for if we wait on JESUS, we ſhall know his will plainly, one way or another) *Lazarus* is dead." And even then, leſt they ſhould be ſwallowed up with overmuch ſorrow, he immediately adds, verſe 15. "And I am glad for your ſakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe," or have more faith, or have that faith which you already poſſeſs increaſed and confirmed. A plain proof this, that all JESU's delays to anſwer prayer, are only to ſtrengthen our faith.

"Nevertheleſs, ſays our LORD, let us go unto him." This was a ſufficient hint, if they knew how to improve it, that he intended to do ſomething extraordinary, though he would not tell them directly what he intended. For the LORD JESUS will keep thoſe whom he loves, at his foot, and dependant on him. "Let us go unto him." He ſtill ſpeaks as though they were his equals. Oh that Chriſtians in general, Oh that miniſters

miſters in particular, would learn of him their great exemplar, to condeſcend to men of low degree! Well, the ſecret is now out. JESUS has ſaid unto them plainly, *Lazarus* is dead. And what reception does this melancholy news meet with? With great condolance, eſpecially from *Thomas*; for verſe 16. "Then ſaid *Thomas*, who is called *Didymus*, unto his fellow diſciples, let us alſo go and die with him;" i. e. according to ſome, with *Lazarus*, with whom, it may be, *Thomas* had contracted an intimate acquaintance. But granting it was ſo; ſhall I commend him for this paſſionate expreſſion? I commend him not. Surely he ſpake unadviſedly with his lips; "Let us alſo go and die with him." As though there was no comfort henceforward to be expected in the world, now his friend *Lazarus* was gone. This was a great fault, and yet a fault that many of GOD's children run into daily, by mourning for their deceaſed relations overmuch, like perſons that have no hope. But this infirmity ought not to be indulged. For if our friends and dear relatives are dead, JESUS, that friend of ſinners, is not dead. He will be better to us than ſeven ſons, and will abundantly ſupply the place of all creature-comforts. But I am more inclined to think that the word *him*, refers to JESUS his dear Maſter; and if ſo, he is ſo far from being blamed, that he ſpake like a good ſoldier of JESUS CHRIST. Let us alſo go, that we may die with him. If our dear maſter will go into *Judea*, and hazard his precious life, let us not any longer make ſuch frivolous excuſes, but let us manfully accompany him; and if the *Jews* ſhould not only be permitted to ſtone, but alſo to kill him, let us alſo go and die with him, we cannot die in a better cauſe. This was a ſpeech worthy of a chriſtian hero, and *Thomas* herein hath ſet us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps, by exciting and provoking one another cloſely to adhere to the bleſſed JESUS, eſpecially when his cauſe and intereſt is in any immediate danger. This exhortation, it ſeems, had a proper effect. They all went, and as far as we know, chearfully accompanied their glorious Maſter.

How their thoughts were exerciſed on the road, we are not told. But I am apt to believe they were a little diſcouraged when they came to *Bethany*. For if When JESUS came, he found

found that *Lazarus* had lien in the grave for four days already." And what would it avail them, to come ſo many miles only to ſee a dead man's tomb? But how wiſely were all things ordered by the bleſſed JESUS, to manifeſt his glory in the moſt extraordinary manner, that not only his diſciples might have their faith confirmed, but many alſo of the *Jews* might believe on him. This *Bethany*, it ſeems, verſe 18. "was nigh unto *Jeruſalem*, about fifteen furlongs off;" or about two miles; and *Martha* and *Mary*, being what we may call people of faſhion, and devout likewiſe; many of the devout, and we may ſuppoſe many of the wealthy *Jews* came from the metropolis, as well as other adjacent places, verſe 19. to *Martha* and *Mary*; not to pay an idle, trifling, but a ſerious, profitable viſit, "to comfort them concerning their brother." This was kind and neighbourly. To weep with thoſe that weep, and to viſit the afflicted in their diſtreſſes, is one eſſential branch of true and undefiled religion. And O how ſweet is it when we viſit ſurviving friends, that we have reaſon to think that their departed relations died in the LORD! And we can therefore give them comfort concerning them: For "bleſſed are the dead, that die in the LORD, even ſo ſaith the Spirit, for they reſt from their labours." This and ſuch like arguments, no doubt, theſe viſitors made uſe of, to comfort *Martha* and *Mary*. And indeed they ſtood in much need of conſolation. For we have reaſon to ſuppoſe, from our LORD's anſwer, "This ſickneſs is not unto death, but for the glory of GOD;" that they had entertained thoughts of the recovery of their brother. But who can tell what theſe two holy ſouls muſt feel, when they found their brother did not recover, but was dead, laid out, and now ſtinking in the ſilent grave! What hard thoughts, without judging them, may we ſuppoſe they entertained concerning JESUS! Think ye not that they were ready to cry out in the language of the prophet, "Thou haſt deceived us, and we are deceived?" But man's extremity is JESU's opportunity. In the multitude of the ſorrows that they had in their hearts, the news of CHRIST's coming refreſhes their ſouls. Somebody or another, commendably officious, privately informs *Martha* of it. "Who, as ſoon as ſhe heard that JESUS was come (without making any apology to the company for her rudeneſs) went

and met him: but *Mary* sat still in the house." But why *Mary*? I thought thou hadst been most forward to attend JESUS, and thy sister *Martha* more prone to be cumbered about the many things of this life. Why sittest thou still? It may be the news was brought only privately to *Martha* (for it is plain from verse 31st, that the *Jews* who were in the house knew not of it;) and *Martha* knowing how our LORD had chid her once, was resolved he should have no reason on the same account to chide her any more; therefore when the news was brought, she would not so much as stay to inform her sister, but went out to see whether it were true or not, and if so, as the eldest sister, she would invite the blessed JESUS in. How happy is it, when CHRIST's reproofs for past neglects, excite our future zeal to come out and meet him! Such reproofs are an excellent oil. Or, it may be, the news reached *Mary*'s ears, as well as *Martha*'s, but being overcome with sorrow, she thought it too good news to be true, and therefore sat still in the house. O how careful ought believers to be, to cherish and maintain, even in the midst of tribulation, a holy confidence and joy in GOD! For the joy of the LORD is a believer's strength. Whereas giving way to melancholy and unbelief, raises gloom and vapours in the mind, clouds the understanding, clogs us in the way of duty, and gives the enemy, who loves to fish in troubled waters, a very great advantage over us.

Mary, perhaps, through the prevalence of this, and being also naturally of a sedentary disposition, "sat still in the house," while her sister *Martha* got the start of her, and went out to meet JESUS. And how does she accost him? Why, in a language bespeaking the distress of a burdened and disordered mind. For she said unto JESUS, verse 21, "LORD, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." Here is a mixture of faith and unbelief. Faith made her say, "LORD, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." But unbelief made her confine CHRIST's power to his bodily presence. Besides, here was a tacit accusation of the blessed JESUS of unkindness, for not coming when they sent unto him the message, "LORD, he whom thou lovest is sick." Once she charged JESUS with want of care; "LORD, carest thou not, that my sister hath left me to serve alone?" Now she takes

him with want of kindneſs. "If thou hadſt been here;" as much as to ſay, if thou hadſt been ſo kind as to have come when we ſent for thee, "my brother had not died;" and by ſaying thus, ſhe does as it were lay her brother's death to JESUS CHRIST. O how apt are even thoſe whom JESUS loves in a peculiar manner, to charge him fooliſhly! How often does the enmity of our deſperately wicked hearts riſe againſt CHRIST, when we are under the afflicting hand of his providence! Are not the very beſt of us frequently tempted, in ſuch circumſtances, to ſay within ourſelves at leaſt, Why does GOD thus cruelly deal with us? Why did not he keep off this ſtroke, ſeeing it was in his power to have prevented it? How ſhould we be aſhamed and confounded before him upon this account? How ſhould we pray and labour to be delivered from this remaining enmity of the heart, and long for that time, when mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of life, and we ſhall never feel one ſingle riſing of heart, againſt a good and gracious, and all-wiſe and glorious Redeemer, any more? However, to do *Martha* juſtice, ſhe pretty well recovers herſelf, verſe 22. "But I know, that even now, whatſoever thou wilt aſk of GOD, GOD will give it to thee." Whether theſe words imply an actual belief of our LORD's divinity, is not certain. To me they do; becauſe we ſhall preſently find, that ſhe did believe our LORD was the Son of GOD, and the Meſſiah which was to come into the world. Therefore when ſhe ſaid, ſhe knew that whatſoever he aſked of GOD, GOD would give it to him, ſhe may be underſtood as referring to GOD the Father, under whom the LORD JESUS acted as Mediator, though equal to him in reſpect to his eternal glory and godhead. This myſtery we may well ſuppoſe her acquainted with, becauſe JESUS had been frequently preaching at her houſe, and conſequently, had opened that myſtery unto her. O what a bleſſed thing muſt it be to have ſuch a Mediator! ſuch an high-prieſt and interceſſor at the Father's right-hand, that whatever he aſks the Father in our behalf, he will give unto us! JESUS takes this kindly at *Martha*'s hand, and paſſes over her infirmity. For if the LORD was exact to mark every thing that we ſay or do amiſs, alas! who could abide? He only calmly ſays unto her, verſe 23. "Thy brother ſhall riſe again."

Glad

Glad tidings theſe of great joy. This ſhould comfort us concerning our deceaſed, pious relations, that ere long they ſhall riſe again, and ſoul and body be for ever with the LORD. Howbeit JESUS ſpake here of an immediate reſurrection, though he did not ſpeak plainly: For CHRIST loves to exerciſe the faith and patience of his diſciples, and frequently leaves them to find out his meaning by degrees. It is beſt for us in our preſent ſtate, that it ſhould be ſo. In heaven it will be otherwiſe. "Thy brother, (ſays CHRIST to *Martha*) ſhall riſe again." She might immediately have replied, When, LORD? But ſhe fetches a circuit as it were, and labours to find out the mind of JESUS by degrees. "I know, ſays ſhe, that he ſhall riſe again at the reſurrection of the laſt day." Theſe words ſeem to imply, that ſhe had ſome diſtant thought of our LORD's deſign to raiſe her brother now, and that ſhe ſpoke thus only to draw our Saviour to ſpeak, and tell her plainly whether he meant to do ſo or not. Thoſe who are acquainted with JESUS, are taught an holy art by the bleſſed Spirit, in dealing with their bleſſed maſter. "I know, ſays ſhe, he ſhall riſe again at the reſurrection of the laſt day," (a notable proof this, by the way, that the pious *Jews* believed the reſurrection of the body). It is juſt the ſame as though ſhe had ſaid, LORD, doſt thou mean that my brother ſhall riſe again before that time? Our Saviour wiſely keeps off from giving her a direct anſwer, but chuſes rather to preach to her heart. "JESUS ſaid unto her, I am the reſurrection and the life: He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live." On this *Martha*'s faith, if in exerciſe, might take hold. O glorious words! How encouraging to you poor ſinners lying in your blood! Though you are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, and might juſtly be condemned to die the ſecond death, yet if you believe on the LORD JESUS you ſhall live. He adds, "And whoſoever believeth in me ſhall never die;" never die as to their ſouls, never die eternally, and conſequently never finally fall away from GOD. This is an encouraging ſoul-comforting declaration for you, O believers, who are thus kept, as it were, in a garriſon, by the mighty power of GOD, through faith, unto ſalvation! "Believeſt thou this?" ſays CHRIST to *Martha*, verſe 26. What avail all the many great and precious promiſes of the goſpel, unleſs they are applied and brought home in particular to each of our

ſouls? The word does not profit unleſs it is mixed with faith. We therefore do well, when we are reading CHRIST's words, to put this queſtion to ourſelves; O my ſoul, believeſt thou this? And well would it be for us, if upon putting this queſtion to ourſelves, we could with the ſame holy confidence, and in the ſame delightful frame, ſay with *Martha*, verſe 27. "Yea, LORD: I believe that thou art the CHRIST, the Son of GOD, which ſhould come into the world." This I think is a direct confeſſion of our LORD's divinity. How full was her heart when ſhe ſpoke theſe words! I am perſuaded it burnt within her. What a divine warmth had ſhe contracted by talking with JESUS! How does ſhe long that her ſiſter might ſhare in her holy joy! For when ſhe had ſo ſaid, verſe 28. "ſhe went away;" full of love, no doubt, and called *Mary* her ſiſter, as all will labour to call their near relations, who have felt the LORD JESUS to be the reſurrection and the life themſelves. But *Martha* took care, in the midſt of her zeal (as we ſhould always do) to behave with prudence; and therefore "ſhe called her ſiſter ſecretly, ſaying, The maſter is come, and calleth for thee." The maſter is come. She need ſay no more; *Mary* knew very well whom ſhe meant. For holy ſouls eaſily underſtand one another when talking of their maſter JESUS. The divine *Herbert* uſed to delight (when ſpeaking of JESUS) to ſay, "My Maſter;" perhaps he learned it of *Martha*, who ſaid here, "The Maſter is come, and calleth for thee." But what is this thou ſayeſt, *Martha*? The Maſter is come, and calleth for thee? Surely a woman of thy exalted piety will not tell a deliberate lie, and in order to induce thy ſiſter to come to JESUS, acquaint her that JESUS called her, when indeed he did not. Thou needeſt not put thyſelf to ſuch an expence, or do ſo much evil, that good may come of it. Only mention JESUS to *Mary*, and let her know for a certainty that the Maſter is indeed come, and I am perſuaded ſhe will ſit no longer. *Martha* no doubt knew, and therefore I cannot judge her as ſome do, as though in her haſte ſhe ſaid what was not true. For JESUS might bid her to call her ſiſter, though it be not directly mentioned in this chapter. And it is very probable, that our LORD did enquire after *Mary*, becauſe ſhe uſed to take ſuch great delight in ſitting at his feet, and hearing the gracious words that proceeded out of his mouth. "The Maſter is come (ſaith

Martha

Martha to her ſiſter) and calleth for thee.' And ſo ſay I to all poor ſinners, JESUS, your LORD and MASTER, your PRINCE and SAVIOUR, is come, come unto this lower world, and is come this day in his word, and by me, who am leſs than the leaſt of all his ſervants, and calleth for you. O that he may alſo come in the demonſtration of the Spirit, and by his mighty power bow your ſtubborn hearts and wills to obey the call, as holy *Mary* did.

For we are told, verſe 29. "When ſhe heard that, ſhe roſe quickly, and came to JESUS." Sinners, when will you do ſo? Or why do you not do ſo? How know you whether JESUS will call for you any more, before he calls you by death to judgment? Linger, O linger no longer. Fly, fly for your lives. Ariſe quickly, and with *Mary* come to JESUS. She obeyed the call ſo very ſpeedily, that her haſte was taken notice of by her viſitors. "The *Jews* then, who were with her in the houſe, and comforted her, when they ſaw *Mary* that ſhe roſe up haſtily (without any ceremony at all) and went out, followed her, ſaying, ſhe goeth to the grave, to weep there." How wiſely does our LORD permit and order all this, to bring the *Jews* out to behold the wonderful miracle that he was about to perform! Little did *Mary* and the *Jews* think for what end they were thus providentially led out. But when JESUS hath work to be done, he will bring ſouls to the place where he intends to call them, in ſpite of men or devils. But how does *Mary* behave when ſhe comes to JESUS? We may be aſſured, not without great humility. No wonder then we are told, verſe 32. that "when ſhe ſaw him, ſhe immediately fell down at his feet (a place *Mary* had been uſed to, and in an agony of grief, ſays, as her ſiſter had done before her) LORD, if thou hadſt been here, my brother had not died." Poor *Mary*! Her concern was great indeed. Though ſhe was a holy woman, ſhe could not well bear the loſs of her brother. She knew very well, that the world would miſs him, and no doubt he had been a kind and tender brother to her. But I am afraid ſhe was ſinfully overcome with overmuch ſorrow. However, had we been there, the ſight muſt have affected us. It ſeems to have affected the viſitors, eſpecially the bleſſed JESUS. He, inſtead of blaming her, for her tacitly accuſing him of unkindneſs, and for not coming to her brother's relief, pities and ſympa-

thizes both with *Mary* and her weeping friends! "When JESUS ſaw her weep, and the *Jews* alſo weeping, he groaned in his Spirit, and was troubled." Troubled: Not with any ſinful perturbation we may be aſſured: nothing of that nature could poſſibly be in his ſinleſs ſoul. And, therefore, ſome have judiciouſly enough compared the trouble our LORD now felt, to ſome chryſtal water ſhaken in a glaſs or bottle; you may ſhake it, but there will be no ſediment: it will be chryſtal water ſtill. "He groaned in his ſpirit." I do not ſee why this may not be underſtood of his praying in the ſpirit, which maketh interceſſion for the ſaints, with αλαλητοις στεναγμοις, "groanings that cannot be uttered." Methinks I ſee the immaculate Lamb of GOD, ſecretly, but powerfully agonizing with his Father; his heart is big with ſympathy! At length, out of the fulneſs of it, he ſaid, ver. 34. "Where have ye laid him? They (I ſuppoſe *Mary* and *Martha*) ſay unto him, LORD, come and ſee." He came, he ſaw, "He wept," ver. 35. It is put in a verſe by itſelf, that we might pauſe a while, and aſk, why JESUS wept?

He wept, to ſhew us, that it was no ſin to ſhed a tear of love and reſignation at the grave of a deceaſed friend; he wept, to ſee what havock ſin had made in the world, and how it had reduced man, who was originally little lower than the angels, (by making him ſubject to death) to a level with the beaſts that periſh: but above all, he wept at the foreſight of the people's unbelief; he wept, to think how many then preſent, would not only not believe on, but would be hardened, and have their prejudices increaſed more and more againſt him, though he ſhould raiſe *Lazarus* from the dead before their eyes. Well then may miniſters be excuſed, who, whilſt they are preaching, now and then drop a few tears, at the conſideration of their ſermons being, through the perverſeneſs and unbelief of many of their audience, a ſavour of death unto death, inſtead of a ſavour of life unto life. Upon a like occaſion JESUS wept. What an affecting ſight was here! Let us for a while ſuppoſe ourſelves placed amidſt theſe holy mourners; let us imagine that we ſee the ſepulchre juſt before us, and the *Jews*, and *Mary*, and the bleſſed JESUS weeping round it. Surely, the moſt obdurate of us all muſt drop a tear, or at leaſt be affected with the ſight; we find that it affected thoſe who were really by-ſtanders: for then ſaid the

Jews,

Jews, ver. 36. "Behold, how he loved him." And did they ſay, Behold, how he loved him, when JESUS only ſhed a few tears over the grave of his departed *Lazarus*? Come then, O ſinners, and view CHRIST dying and pouring out his precious heart's blood for you upon an accurſed tree, and then ſurely you muſt needs cry out, Behold, how he loved us!

But alas, though all were affected, yet, it ſeems, all were not well affected at ſeeing JESUS weep! For we are told, ver. 37. that ſome of them ſaid, "Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have cauſed that even this man ſhould not have died?" One would imagine, that Satan himſelf could ſcarce have uttered a more perverſe ſpeech: every word is full of ſpite and rancour. Could not this man, this fellow, this deceiver, who pretends to ſay, that he opened the eyes of the blind, have cauſed that this man, whom he ſeems to love ſo, ſhould not have died? Is not this a ſufficient proof that he is a cheat? Have we catched him at laſt? Is it likely that he really helped others, when he could not help his own friend? ——O how patient ought the ſervants of our LORD to be! And how may they expect to be cenſured, and have their good deeds queſtioned, and leſſened, when their bleſſed Maſter has been thus treated before them! However, JESUS will do good, notwithſtanding all theſe ſlights put upon him; and therefore, again groaning in himſelf, "he cometh to the grave; it was a cave, (or vault, as is cuſtomary in great families) and a ſtone lay upon it; JESUS ſaid, ver. 39. Take ye away the ſtone." How gradually does our LORD proceed, in order to engage the people's attention the more! Methinks I ſee them all eye, all ear, and eagerly waiting to ſee the iſſue of this affair. But *Martha* now returning with the reſt of the company, ſeems to have loſt that good frame which ſhe was in when ſhe went to call her ſiſter; "She ſaith unto him, (ver. 39.) LORD, by this time he ſtinketh: for he hath been *either* dead *or* buried four days." O the dismal effects of carnal reaſoning! How naturally do we fall into doubts and fears, when we have not our eye ſimply directed to the bleſſed JESUS! *Martha*, inſtead of looking up to him, looks down into the grave, and poring upon her brother's ſtinking corpſe, falls into a fit of unbelief: "By this time he ſtinketh;" and, therefore, a ſight of him will only be offenſive. Perhaps ſhe might think our LORD only wanted

to take a view of her brother *Lazarus*; JESUS, therefore, to give her yet a further hint, that he intended to do ſomething extraordinary, ſaith unto her, ver. 40. "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldſt believe, thou ſhouldſt ſee the glory of GOD?" Our LORD ſpeaks here with ſome degree of warmth: for nothing diſpleaſes him more than the unbelief of his own diſciples. "Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldſt believe, thou ſhouldſt ſee the glory of GOD?" When CHRIST firſt ſpoke theſe words unto her, we are not told; it might be, this was part of their converſation upon another occaſion ſome time before: however, he checks her openly for her unbelief now; for thoſe whom JESUS loves, muſt expect to be rebuked ſharply by him, whenever they diſhonour him by unbelief. The reproof is taken.

Without making any more objections, "They took away the ſtone from the place where the dead was laid." And now behold with what ſolemnity the holy JESUS prepares himſelf to execute his gracious deſign! "And JESUS lift up his eyes, and ſaid, Father, I thank thee that thou haſt heard me; and I knew that thou heareſt me always: but becauſe of the people which ſtand by, I ſaid it, that they may believe that thou haſt ſent me." Who can expreſs with what fervor and intenſeneſs of ſpirit, our glorious High-prieſt uttered theſe words! They are a thankſgiving ariſing from an aſſurance that his Father had heard him: for CHRIST, as Mediator, was inferior to the Father. "I knew that thou heareſt me always (and ſo may every believer in his degree ſay too); but becauſe of the people which ſtand by, I ſaid it."—Said what? We do not hear that JESUS ſaid any thing by way of prayer before; and that is true, if we mean vocally, but mentally he did ſay ſomething, even when he groaned in the ſpirit once and again, and was troubled. There is a way of praying, even when we do not, and cannot ſpeak. "Why cryeſt thou," ſaid GOD to *Moſes*; though we do not hear that he ſpoke one ſingle word: but he cried in his heart. And I obſerve this for the comfort of ſome weak, but real chriſtians, who think they never pray, unleſs they can have a great flow of words; but this is a great miſtake: for we often pray beſt, when we can ſpeak leaſt. There are times when the heart is too big to ſpeak: and the ſpirit itſelf maketh interceſſion for the ſaints, and that too according to the will of GOD, with groanings

groanings that cannot be uttered. Such was *Hannah's* prayer for a ſon, "She ſpake not, only her lips moved!" and ſuch was our LORD's way of praying at this time. And perhaps the ſoul is never in a better frame, than when in a holy ſtillneſs, and unſpeakable ſerenity, it can put itſelf as a blank in JESUS's hand, for him to ſtamp on it juſt what he pleaſes.

And now the hour of our Saviour's performing this long-expected miracle, is come. Ver. 43. "When he thus had ſpoken, he cried with a loud voice, *Lazarus*, come forth." With the word there went an irreſiſtible power: he ſpake, and it was done: he cried, and behold, "He that was dead came forth bound hand and foot with grave cloaths; and his face was bound about with a napkin." What a ſight was here! Methinks I ſee ſurprize ſit upon each ſpectator's face: as the body riſes, their wonder riſes too. See how they gaze! See how their looks beſpeak the language of aſtoniſhed hearts; and all with a kind of ſilent, but expreſſive oratory, ready to ſay, What manner of man is this? Surely this is the Meſſiah that was to come into the world. How did the hearts of *Martha* and *Mary*, as we may very well ſuppoſe, leap for joy! How were they aſhamed of themſelves, for charging JESUS fooliſhly, and taxing him with unkindneſs, for not coming to prevent their brother's dying! It is true, CHRIST ſuffered him to die, but behold he is now alive again! JESUS never denies us one thing, but he intends to give us ſomething better in the ſtead of it. Think you not that *Martha* and *Mary* were now the moſt officious to obey our bleſſed LORD's command, "Looſe him, and let him go?" That ſame power that raiſed *Lazarus* from the dead, might have alſo taken the grave-cloaths from him: but JESUS CHRIST never did, and never will work a needleſs miracle. Others could unlooſe his grave-cloaths, but JESUS alone could unlooſe the bands of death.

And now, perhaps, ſome may be ready to aſk, What news hath *Lazarus* brought from the other world! But ſtop, O man, thy vain curioſity! It is forbidden, and therefore uſeleſs knowledge. The ſcriptures are ſilent concerning it. Why ſhould we deſire to be wiſe above what is written? It becomes us rather to be wholly employed in adoring the gracious hand of that mighty Redeemer who raiſed him from the dead,

dead, and to ſee (now we have heard the hiſtory) what improvement we can make of ſuch a remarkable and inſtructive tranſaction.

Would to GOD that my preaching upon the reſurrection of *Lazarus* to-day, may have the ſame bleſſed effects upon you, as the ſight of it had upon ſome of the ſtanders-by: For we are told, ver. 45. "Then many of the *Jews* who came to *Mary*, and had ſeen the things which JESUS did, believed on him." A profitable viſit this! The beſt, no doubt, that they ever paid in their lives. And this was in anſwer to our Saviour's prayer, "But becauſe of the people who ſtand by, I ſaid it, that they may believe, that thou haſt ſent me." One would imagine, that all who ſaw this miracle, were induced thereby, really to believe on him: But alas! I could almoſt ſay, that I can tell you of a greater miracle than raiſing *Lazarus* from the dead. And what is that? Why, that ſome of theſe very perſons who were on the ſpot, inſtead of believing on him, "went their way to the Phariſees, and told them what JESUS had done." ver. 46. It was ſo far from convincing them, that it only excited their envy, ſtirred up the whole hell of their ſelf-righteous hearts, and made them, from that day forward, "take counſel together," to execute what they had long before deſigned, to put the innocent JESUS to death. See how buſy they are, ver. 47. "Then gathered the chief prieſts and the Phariſees a council, and ſaid, What do we? For this man doeth many miracles." Envy itſelf, it ſeems, could not deny that. And need they ſay then, "What do we," or what ſhould we do? Believe in, to be ſure, and ſubmit to him; take up the croſs, and follow him. No; on the contrary, ſay they, ver. 48. "If we let him thus alone, (which they would not have done ſo long, had not GOD put a hook in the Leviathan's jaws) all men will believe on him." And ſuppoſe they did? Then all men would be bleſſed indeed, and have a title to true happineſs. No, ſay they, "then the *Romans* ſhall come and take away both our place and nation." But were not the *Romans* come already? Were they not at this time tributaries to *Cæſar?* But they were afraid of the church as well as the ſtate: "They will come and take away our place," our place of worſhip: and conſequently, they look upon JESUS CHRIST and his proceedings, and adherents, as dangerous both to church and ſtate.

This

This hath been always the method of Phariſees and high-prieſts, when they have been taking counſel againſt the LORD JESUS, and his dear anointed ones. But they need not have been afraid on this account: for our Saviour's kingdom neither was, nor is of this world; and the only way to have preſerved their place and nation, was to have countenanced, and as much as in them lay, cauſed all to believe on JESUS. How miſerably were they out in their politics! The death of JESUS, which they thought would ſave, was the grand cauſe of the utter deſtruction both of their place and nation: And ſo will all politics formed againſt CHRIST and his goſpel end at laſt in the deſtruction of thoſe who contrived them.

O the deſperate wickedneſs and treachery of man's deceitful heart! Where are the ſcribes, where are the infidels, where are the letter-learned diſputers of this world, who are daily calling for a repetition of miracles, in order to confirm and evidence the truth of the chriſtian religion? Surely if they believe not *Moſes* and the prophets, neither would they believe, though one roſe from the dead. Here was one raiſed from the dead before many witneſſes, and yet all thoſe witneſſes did by no means believe on JESUS. For divine faith is not wrought in the heart by moral perſuaſion (though moral ſuaſion is very often made uſe of as a means to convey it); faith is the peculiar gift of GOD: no one can come to JESUS unleſs the Father draw him: and, therefore, that I may draw near the cloſe of this diſcourſe, let me ſhut up all with a word of exhortation.

Come, ye dead, Chriſtleſs, unconverted ſinners, come and ſee the place where they laid the body of the deceaſed *Lazarus*; behold him laid out, bound hand and foot with grave-cloaths, locked up and ſtinking in a dark cave, with a great ſtone placed on the top of it! View him again and again; go nearer to him; be not afraid; ſmell him, ah! how he ſtinketh. Stop there now, pauſe a while; and whilſt thou art gazing upon the corpſe of *Lazarus*, give me leave to tell thee with great plainneſs, but greater love, that this dead, bound, entombed, ſtinking careaſe, is but a faint repreſentation of thy poor ſoul in its natural ſtate: for, whether thou believeſt it or not, thy ſpirit which thou beareſt about with thee, ſepulchred in fleſh and blood, is as literally dead to GOD, and as truly

dead

dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, as the body of *Lazarus* was in the cave. Was he bound hand and foot with grave-cloaths? So art thou bound hand and foot with thy corruptions: and as a ſtone was laid on the ſepulchre, ſo is there a ſtone of unbelief upon thy ſtupid heart. Perhaps thou haſt lain in this ſtate, not only four days, but many years, ſtinking in GOD's noſtrils. And, what is ſtill more affecting, thou art as unable to raiſe thyſelf out of this loathſome, dead ſtate, to a life of righteouſneſs and true holineſs, as ever *Lazarus* was to raiſe himſelf from the cave in which he lay ſo long. Thou mayeſt try the power of thy own boaſted free-will, and the force and energy of moral perſuaſion and rational arguments (which, without all doubt, have their proper place in religion); but all thy efforts, exerted with never ſo much vigour, will prove quite fruitleſs and abortive, till that ſame JESUS, who ſaid, "Take away the ſtone," and cried, "*Lazarus*, come forth," comes by his mighty power, removes the ſtone of unbelief, ſpeaks life to thy dead ſoul, looſes thee from the fetters of thy ſins and corruptions, and by the influences of his bleſſed Spirit, enables thee to ariſe, and to walk in the way of his holy commandments. And O that he would now rend the heavens, and come down amongſt you! O that there may be a ſtirring among the dry bones this day! O that whilſt I am ſpeaking, and ſaying, "Dead ſinners, come forth," a power, an almighty power might accompany the word, and cauſe you to emerge into new life!

If the LORD ſhould vouchſafe me ſuch a mercy, and but one ſingle ſoul in this great congregation, ſhould ariſe and ſhake himſelf from the duſt of his natural ſtate; according to the preſent frame of my heart, I ſhould not care if preaching this ſermon here in the fields, was an occaſion of haſtening my death, as raiſing *Lazarus* haſtened the death of my bleſſed Maſter. For methinks death, in ſome reſpects, is more tolerable, than to ſee poor ſinners day by day lying ſepulchred, dead and ſtinking in ſin. O that you ſaw how loathſome you are in the ſight of GOD, whilſt you continue in your natural ſtate! I believe you would not ſo contentedly hug your chains, and refuſe to be ſet at liberty.

Methinks

Methinks I ſee ſome of you affected at this part of my diſcourſe. What ſay you? Are there not ſome ready to complain, alas! we have ſome relations preſent, who are ſo notoriouſly wicked, that they not only hug their chains, but make a mock of ſin, and ſtink not only in the ſight of God, but man. Dear ſouls! you are ready to urge this, as a reaſon why JESUS will not raiſe them; and think it hard, perhaps, that JESUS does not come, in anſwer to your repeated groans and prayers, to convert and ſave them. But what JESUS ſaid unto *Martha*, I ſay unto you, "Believe, and you ſhall ſee the glory of GOD." Think it not a thing incredible, that GOD ſhould raiſe their dead ſouls. Think not hard of JESUS for delaying an anſwer to your prayers: aſſure yourſelves he heareth you always. And who knows, but this day JESUS may viſit ſome of your dear relations hearts, upon whoſe account you have travelled in birth till CHRIST be formed in them? You have already ſympathized with *Martha* and *Mary*, in their doubts and fears; who knows but you may alſo be partakers of that joy which their ſouls experienced, when they received their riſen brother into their longing arms.

O Chriſtleſs ſouls, you do not know what grief your continuance in ſin occaſions to your godly relations! You do not know how you grieve the heart of JESUS. I beſeech you give him no freſh cauſe to weep over you upon account of your unbelief: let him not again groan in his ſpirit and be troubled. Behold how he has loved you, even ſo as to lay down his life for you. What could he do more? I pray you, therefore, dead ſinners, come forth; ariſe and ſup with JESUS. This was an honour conferred on *Lazarus*, and the ſame honour awaits you; Not that you ſhall ſit down with him perſonally in this life, as *Lazarus* did; but you ſhall ſit down with him at the table of his ordinances, eſpecially at the table of the Lord's-ſupper, and ere long ſit down with him in the kingdom of heaven.

Happy, thrice happy ye, who are already raiſed from ſpiritual death, and have an earneſt of an infinitely better and more glorious reſurrection in your hearts. You know a little, how delightful it muſt have been to *Martha* and *Mary* and *Lazarus*, to ſit down with the bleſſed JESUS here below; but

how infinitely more delightful will it be, to ſit down, not only with *Mary* and *Martha*, but with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, and all your other dear brethren and ſiſters, in the kingdom of heaven. Do you not long for that time, when JESUS ſhall ſay unto you, "Come up hither?" Well! bleſſed be GOD, yet a little while, and that ſame JESUS, who cried with a loud voice, "*Lazarus*, come forth;" ſhall with the ſame voice, and with the ſame power, ſpeak unto all that are in their graves, and they ſhall come forth. That all who hear me this day may be then enabled to lift up their heads and rejoice, that the day of their compleat redemption is indeed fully come, may JESUS CHRIST grant, for his infinite mercy's ſake. *Amen*, and *Amen*.

SERMON

SERMON XL.

The Holy Spirit convincing the World of Sin, Righteouſneſs, and Judgment.

JOHN xvi. 8.

And when he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin, and of righteouſneſs, and of judgment.

THESE words contain part of a gracious promiſe, which the bleſſed JESUS was pleaſed to make to his weeping and ſorrowful diſciples. The time was now drawing near, in which the Son of man was firſt to be lifted up on the croſs, and afterwards to heaven. Kind, wondrous kind! had this merciful High-prieſt been to his diſciples, during the time of his tabernacling amongſt them. He had compaſſion on their infirmities, anſwered for them when aſſaulted by their enemies, and ſet them right when out of the way, either in principle or practice. He neither called nor uſed them as ſervants, but as friends; and he revealed his ſecrets to them from time to time. He opened their underſtandings, that they might underſtand the ſcriptures; explained to them the hidden myſteries of the kingdom of GOD, when he ſpoke to others in parables: nay, he became the ſervant of them all, and even condeſcended to waſh their feet. The thoughts of parting with ſo dear and loving a Maſter as this, eſpecially for a long ſeaſon, muſt needs affect them much. When on a certain occaſion he intended to be abſent from them only for a night, we are told, he was obliged to conſtrain them to leave him; no wonder then, that when he now informed them he muſt entirely go away, and that the Phariſees in his abſence ſhould put them out of their ſynagogues, and excommunicate them; yea, that the time ſhould come, that whoſoever killed them,

would think they did GOD ſervice (a propheoy, one would imagine, in an eſpecial manner deſigned for the ſuffering miniſters of this generation); no wonder, I ſay, conſidering all this, that we are told, ver. 6. Sorrow had filled their hearts: "Becauſe I have ſaid theſe things unto you, ſorrow hath filled your hearts." The expreſſion is very emphatical; their hearts were ſo full of concern, that they were ready to burſt. In order, therefore, to reconcile them to this mournful diſpenſation, our dear and compaſſionate Redeemer ſhews them the neceſſity he lay under to leave them; "Nevertheleſs I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away:" As though he had ſaid, Think not, my dear diſciples, that I leave you out of anger: no, it is for your ſakes, for your profit, that I go away: for if I go not away, if I die not upon the croſs for your ſins, and riſe again for your juſtification, and aſcend into heaven to make interceſſion, and plead my merits before my Father's throne; the Comforter, the Holy Ghoſt, will not, cannot come unto you; but if I depart, I will ſend him unto you. And that they might know what he was to do, "When he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin, and of righteouſneſs, and of judgment."

The perſon referred to in the words of the text, is plainly the Comforter, the Holy Ghoſt; and the promiſe was firſt made to our LORD's apoſtles. But though it was primarily made to them, and was literally and remarkably fulfilled at the day of Pentecoſt, when the Holy Ghoſt came down as a mighty ruſhing wind, and alſo when three thouſand were pricked to the heart by *Peter*'s preaching; yet, as the Apoſtles were the repreſentatives of the whole body of believers, we muſt infer, that this promiſe muſt be looked upon as ſpoken to us, and to our children, and to as many as the LORD our GOD ſhall call.

My deſign from theſe words, is to ſhew the manner in which the Holy Ghoſt generally works upon the hearts of thoſe, who, through grace, are made veſſels of mercy, and tranſlated from the kingdom of darkneſs into the kingdom of GOD's dear Son.

I ſay, *generally:* For, as GOD is a ſovereign agent, his ſacred Spirit bloweth not only on whom, but when and how it liſteth. Therefore, far be it from me to confine the Almighty

to

to one way of acting, or ſay, that all undergo an equal degree of conviction: no, there is a holy variety in GOD's methods of calling home his elect. But this we may affirm aſſuredly, that, wherever there is a work of true conviction and converſion wrought upon a ſinner's heart, the Holy Ghoſt, whether by a greater or leſs degree of inward ſoul-trouble, does that which our LORD JESUS told the diſciples, in the words of the text, that he ſhould do when he came.

If any of you ridicule inward religion, or think there is no ſuch thing as our feeling or receiving the Holy Ghoſt, I fear my preaching will be quite fooliſhneſs to you; and that you will underſtand me no more than if I ſpoke to you in an unknown tongue. But as the promiſe in the text, is made to the world, and as I know it will be fulfilling till time ſhall be no more, I ſhall proceed to explain the general way whereby the Holy Ghoſt works upon every converted ſinner's heart; and I hope that the LORD, even whilſt I am ſpeaking, will be pleaſed to fulfil it in many of your hearts. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment."

The word, which we tranſlate *reprove*, ought to be rendred *convince*; and in the original it implies a conviction by way of argumentation; and coming with a power upon the mind equal to a demonſtration. A great many ſcoffers of theſe laſt days, will aſk ſuch as they term pretenders to the Spirit, how they feel the Spirit, and how they know the Spirit? They might as well aſk, how they know, and how they feel the ſun when it ſhines upon the body? For with equal power and demonſtration does the Spirit of GOD work upon and convince the ſoul. And,

Firſt, It convinces of ſin; and generally of ſome enormous ſin, the worſt perhaps the convicted perſon ever was guilty of. Thus, when our LORD was converſing with the woman of *Samaria*, he convinced her firſt of her adultery: "Woman, go call thy huſband. The woman anſwered, and ſaid, I have no huſband. JESUS ſaid unto her, Thou haſt well ſaid, I have no huſband: for thou haſt had five huſbands, and he whom thou now haſt, is not thy huſband: in this ſaidſt thou truly." With this there went ſuch a powerful conviction of

all her other actual ſins, that ſoon after, "ſhe left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and ſaith to the men, Come, and ſee a man that told me all things that ever I did: is not this the CHRIST?" Thus our LORD alſo dealt with the perſecutor *Saul:* he convinced him firſt of the horrid ſin of perſecution; "*Saul, Saul,* why perſecuteſt thou me?" Such a ſenſe of all his other ſins, probably at the ſame time revived in his mind, that immediately he died; that is, died to all his falſe confidences, and was thrown into ſuch an agony of ſoul, that he continued three days, and neither did eat nor drink. This is the method the Spirit of GOD generally takes in dealing with ſinners; he firſt convinces them of ſome heinous actual ſin, and at the ſame time brings all their other ſins into remembrance, and as it were ſets them in battle-array before them: "When he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin."

And was it ever thus with you, my dear hearers? (For I muſt queſtion you as I go along, becauſe I intend, by the Divine help, to preach not only to your heads, but your hearts). Did the Spirit of GOD ever bring all your ſins thus to remembrance, and make you cry out to GOD, "Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me?" Did your actual ſins ever appear before you, as though drawn in a map? If not, you have great reaſon (unleſs you were ſanctified from the womb) to ſuſpect that you are not convicted, much more not converted, and that the promiſe of the text was never yet fulfilled in your hearts.

Farther: When the Comforter comes into a ſinner's heart, though it generally convinces the ſinner of his actual ſin firſt, yet it leads him to ſee and bewail his original ſin, the fountain from which all theſe polluted ſtreams do flow.

Though every thing in the earth, air, and water; every thing both without and within, concur to prove the truth of that aſſertion in the ſcripture, "in *Adam* we all have died;" yet moſt are ſo hardened through the deceitfulneſs of ſin, that notwithſtanding they may give an aſſent to the truth of the propoſition in their heads, yet they never felt it really in their hearts. Nay, ſome in words profeſſedly deny it, though their works too, too plainly prove them to be degenerate ſons of a degenerate father. But when the Comforter, the Spirit of GOD,

GOD, arreſts a ſinner, and convinces him of ſin, all carnal reaſoning againſt original corruption, every proud and high imagination, which exalteth itſelf againſt that doctrine, is immediately thrown down; and he is made to cry out, "Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?" He now finds that concupiſcence is ſin; and does not ſo much bewail his actual ſins, as the inward perverſeneſs of his heart, which he now finds not only to be an enemy to, but alſo direct enmity againſt GOD.

And did the Comforter, my dear friends, ever come with ſuch a convincing power as this into your hearts? Were you ever made to ſee and feel, that in your fleſh dwelleth no good thing; that you are conceived and born in ſin; that you are by nature children of wrath; that GOD would be juſt if he damned you, though you never committed an actual ſin in your lives? So often as you have been at church and ſacrament, did you ever feelingly confeſs, that there was no health in you; that the remembrance of your original and actual ſins was grievous unto you, and the burden of them intolerable? If not, you have been only offering to GOD vain oblations; you never yet prayed in your lives; the Comforter never yet came effectually into your ſouls: conſequently you are not in the faith properly ſo called; no, you are at preſent in a ſtate of death and damnation.

Again, the Comforter, when he comes effectually to work upon a ſinner, not only convinces him of the ſin of his nature, and the ſin of his life, but alſo of the ſin of his duties.

We all naturally are Legaliſts, thinking to be juſtified by the works of the law. When ſomewhat awakened by the terrors of the LORD, we immediately, like the Phariſees of old, go about to eſtabliſh our own righteouſneſs, and think we ſhall find acceptance with GOD, if we ſeek it with tears: finding ourſelves damned by nature and our actual ſins, we then think to recommend ourſelves to GOD by our duties, and hope, by our doings of one kind or another, to inherit eternal life. But, whenever the Comforter comes into the heart, it convinces the ſoul of theſe falſe reſts, and makes the ſinner to ſee that all his righteouſneſſes are but as filthy rags; and that, for the moſt pompous ſervices, he deſerves no better a doom than that of the unprofitable ſervant, "to be thrown into outer

darkneſs, where is weeping, and wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth."

And was this degree of conviction ever wrought in any of your ſouls? Did the Comforter ever come into your hearts, ſo as to make you ſick of your duties, as well as your ſins? Were you ever, with the great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles*, made to abhor your own righteouſneſs which is by the law, and acknowledge that you deſerve to be damned, though you ſhould give all your goods to feed the poor? Were you made to feel, that your very repentance needed to be repented of, and that every thing in yourſelves is but dung and droſs? And that all the arguments you can fetch for mercy, muſt be out of the heart and pure unmerited love of GOD? Were you ever made to lye at the feet of ſovereign Grace, and to ſay, LORD, if thou wilt, thou mayeſt ſave me; if not, thou mayeſt juſtly damn me; I have nothing to plead, I can in no wiſe juſtify myſelf in thy ſight; my beſt performances, I ſee, will condemn me; and all I have to depend upon is thy free grace? What ſay you? Was this ever, or is this now, the habitual language of your hearts? You have been frequently at the temple; but did you ever approach it in the temper of the poor Publican, and, after you have done all, acknowledge that you have done nothing; and, upon a feeling experimental ſenſe of your own unworthineſs and ſinfulneſs every way, ſmite upon your breaſts, and ſay, "GOD be merciful to us ſinners?" If you never were thus minded, the Comforter never yet effectually came into your ſouls, you are out of CHRIST; and if GOD ſhould require your ſouls in that condition, he would be no better to you than a conſuming fire.

But there is a fourth ſin, of which the Comforter, when he comes, convinces the ſoul, and which alone (it is very remarkable) our LORD mentions, as though it was the only ſin worth mentioning; for indeed it is the root of all other ſins whatſoever: it is the reigning as well as the damning ſin of the world. And what now do you imagine that ſin may be? It is that curſed ſin, that root of all other evils, I mean the ſin of *unbelief*. Says our LORD, verſe 9. "Of ſin, becauſe they believe not on me."

But does the chriſtian world, or any of you that hear me this day, want the Holy Ghoſt to convince you of unbelief?

Are

Are there any infidels here? Yes, (O that I had not too great reaſon to think ſo!) I fear moſt are ſuch: not indeed ſuch infidels as profeſſedly deny the LORD that bought us (though I fear too many even of ſuch monſters are in every country); but I mean ſuch unbelievers, that have no more faith in CHRIST than the devils themſelves. Perhaps you may think you believe, becauſe you repeat the Creed, or ſubſcribe to a Confeſſion of Faith; becauſe you go to church or meeting, receive the ſacrament, and are taken into full communion. Theſe are bleſſed privileges; but all this may be done, without our being true believers. And I know not how to detect your falſe hypocritical faith better, than by putting to you this queſtion: How long have you believed? Would not moſt of you ſay, as long as we can remember; we never did diſbelieve? Then this is a certain ſign that you have no true faith at all; no, not ſo much as a grain of muſtard-ſeed: for, if you believe now, (unleſs you were ſanctified from your infancy, which is the caſe of ſome) you muſt know that there was a time in which you did not believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and the Holy Ghoſt, if ever you received it, convinced you of this. Eternal truth has declared, "When he is come, he will convince the world of ſin, becauſe they believe not on me."

None of us believe by nature: but after the Holy Ghoſt has convinced us of the ſin of our natures, and the ſin of our lives and duties, in order to convince us of our utter inability to ſave ourſelves, and that we muſt be beholden to GOD, as for every thing elſe, ſo for faith (without which it is impoſſible to pleaſe, or be ſaved by CHRIST) he convinces us alſo, that we have no faith. "Doſt thou believe on the Son of GOD?" is the grand queſtion which the Holy Ghoſt now puts to the ſoul: at the ſame time he works with ſuch power and demonſtration, that the ſoul ſees, and is obliged to confeſs, that it has no faith.

This is a thing little thought of by moſt who call themſelves believers. They dream they are chriſtians, becauſe they live in a chriſtian country: If they were born *Turks*, they would believe on *Mahomet*; for what is that which men commonly call faith, but an outward conſent to the eſtabliſhed religion? But do not you thus deceive your

own ſelves; true faith is quite another thing. Aſk yourſelves, therefore, whether or not the Holy Ghoſt ever powerfully convinced you of the ſin of unbelief? You are perhaps ſo devout (you may imagine) as to get a catalogue of ſins; which you look over, and confeſs in a formal manner, as often as you go to the holy ſacrament: but among all your ſins, did you ever once confeſs and bewail that damning ſin of unbelief? Were you ever made to cry out, "LORD, give me faith; LORD, give me to believe on thee; O that I had faith! O that I could believe!" If you never were thus diſtreſſed, at leaſt, if you never ſaw and felt that you had no faith, it is a certain ſign that the Holy Ghoſt, the Comforter, never came into and worked ſavingly upon your ſouls.

But is it not odd, that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould be called a Comforter, when it is plain, by the experience of all GOD's children, that this work of conviction is uſually attended with ſore inward conflicts, and a great deal of ſoul-trouble? I anſwer, The Holy Ghoſt may well be termed a Comforter, even in this work; becauſe it is the only way to, and ends in, true ſolid comfort. Bleſſed are they that are thus convicted by him, for they ſhall be comforted. Nay, not only ſo, but there is preſent comfort, even in the midſt of theſe convictions: the ſoul ſecretly rejoices in the ſight of its own miſery, bleſſes GOD for bringing it out of darkneſs into light, and looks forward with a comfortable proſpect of future deliverances, knowing, that, "though ſorrow may endure for a night, joy will come in the morning."

Thus it is that the Holy Ghoſt convinces the ſoul of ſin. And, if ſo, how wretchedly are they miſtaken, that blend the light of the Spirit with the light of conſcience, as all ſuch do, who ſay, that CHRIST lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and that light, if improved, will bring us to JESUS CHRIST? If ſuch doctrine be true, the promiſe in the text was needleſs: our LORD's apoſtles had already that light; the world hereafter to be convinced, had that light; and, if that was ſufficient to bring them to CHRIST, why was it expedient that CHRIST ſhould go away to heaven, to ſend down the Holy Ghoſt to do this for them! Alas! all have not this Spirit: it is the ſpecial gift of GOD, and, without this ſpecial gift, we can never come to CHRIST.

The light of conſcience will accuſe or convince us of any common ſin; but the light of natural conſcience never did, never will, and never can, convince of unbelief. If it could, how comes it to paſs, that not one of the heathens, who improved the light of nature in ſuch an eminent degree, was ever convinced of unbelief? No, natural conſcience cannot effect this; it is the peculiar property of the Holy Ghoſt the Comforter: "When he is come, he will reprove (or convince) the world of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and judgment."

We have heard how he convinces of ſin: we come now to ſhew,

Secondly, What is the righteouſneſs, of which the Comforter convinces the world.

By the word *righteouſneſs*, in ſome places of ſcripture, we are to underſtand that common juſtice which we ought to practiſe between man and man; as when *Paul* is ſaid to reaſon of temperance and righteouſneſs before a trembling *Felix*. But here (as in a multitude of other places in holy writ) we are to underſtand by the word righteouſneſs, the active and paſſive obedience of the dear LORD JESUS; even that perfect, perſonal, all-ſufficient righteouſneſs, which he has wrought out for that world which the Spirit is to convince. "Of righteouſneſs, (ſays our LORD) becauſe I go to the Father, and ye ſee me no more." This is one argument that the Holy Spirit makes uſe of to prove CHRIST's righteouſneſs, becauſe he is gone to the Father, and we ſee him no more. For, had he not wrought out a ſufficient righteouſneſs, the Father would have ſent him back, as not having done what he undertook; and we ſhould have ſeen him again.

O the righteouſneſs of CHRIST! It ſo comforts my ſoul, that I muſt be excuſed if I mention it in almoſt all my diſcourſes. I would not, if I could help it, have one ſermon without it. Whatever infidels may object, or *Arminians* ſophiſtically argue againſt an *imputed righteouſneſs*; yet whoever know themſelves and GOD, muſt acknowledge, that "JESUS CHRIST is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, (and perfect juſtification in the ſight of GOD) to every one that believeth," and that we are to be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him. This, and this only, a poor ſinner can lay hold of, as a ſure anchor of

his hope. Whatever other ſcheme of ſalvation men may ſay, I acknowledge I can ſee no other foundation whereon to build my hopes of ſalvation, but on the rock of CHRIST's perſonal righteouſneſs, imputed to my ſoul.

Many, I believe, have a rational conviction of, and agree with me in this: but rational convictions, if reſted in, avail but little; it muſt be a ſpiritual, experimental conviction of the truth, which is ſaving. And therefore our LORD ſays, when the Holy Ghoſt comes in the day of his power, it convinces of this righteouſneſs, of the reality, compleatneſs, and ſufficiency of it, to ſave a poor ſinner.

We have ſeen how the Holy Ghoſt convinces the ſinner of the ſin of his nature, life, duties, and of the ſin of unbelief; and what then muſt the poor creature do? He muſt, he muſt inevitably deſpair, if there be no hope but in himſelf. When therefore the Spirit has hunted the ſinner out of all his falſe reſts and hiding-places, taken off the pitiful fig-leaves of his own works, and driven him out of the trees of the garden (his outward reformations) and placed him naked before the bar of a ſovereign, holy, juſt, and ſin-avenging GOD; then, then it is, when the ſoul, having the ſentence of death within itſelf becauſe of unbelief, has a ſweet diſplay of CHRIST's righteouſneſs made to it by the Holy Spirit of GOD. Here it is, that he begins more immediately to act in the quality of a Comforter, and convinces the ſoul ſo powerfully of the reality and all-ſufficiency of CHRIST's righteouſneſs, that the ſoul is immediately ſet a hungering and thirſting after it. Now the ſinner begins to ſee, that though he has deſtroyed himſelf, yet in CHRIST is his help; that, though he has no righteouſneſs of his own to recommend him, there is a fulneſs of grace, a fulneſs of truth, a fulneſs of righteouſneſs in the dear LORD JESUS, which, if once imputed to him, will make him happy for ever and ever.

None can tell, but thoſe happy ſouls who have experienced it, with what demonſtration of the Spirit this conviction comes. O how amiable, as well as all-ſufficient, does the bleſſed JESUS now appear! With what new eyes does the ſoul now ſee the LORD its righteouſneſs! Brethren, it is unutterable. If you were never thus convinced of CHRIST's righteouſneſs in your own ſouls, though you may believe it doctrinally,

doctrinally, it will avail you nothing; if the Comforter never came savingly into your souls, then you are comfortless indeed. But

What will this righteousness avail, if the soul has it not in possession?

Thirdly, The next thing therefore the Comforter, when he comes, convinces the soul of, is judgment.

By the word *judgment*, I understand that well-grounded peace, that settled judgment, which the soul forms of itself, when it is enabled by the Spirit of GOD to lay hold on CHRIST's righteousness, which I believe it always does, when convinced in the matter before-mentioned. "Of judgment (says our LORD) because the Prince of this world is judged:" the soul, being enabled to lay hold on CHRIST's perfect righteousness by a lively faith, has a conviction wrought in it by the Holy Spirit, that the Prince of this world is judged. The soul being now justified by faith, has peace with GOD through our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and can triumphantly say, It is CHRIST that justifies me, who is he that condemns me? The strong man armed is now cast out; my soul is in a true peace; the Prince of this world will come and accuse, but he has now no share in me: the blessed Spirit which I have received, and whereby I am enabled to apply CHRIST's righteousness to my poor soul, powerfully convinces me of this: why should I fear? or of what shall I be afraid, since GOD's Spirit witnesses with my spirit, that I am a child of GOD? The LORD is ascended up on high; he has led captivity captive; he has received the Holy Ghost the Comforter, that best of gifts for men: and that Comforter is come into my heart: he is faithful that hath promised: I, even I, am powerfully, rationally, spiritually convicted of sin, righteousness and judgment. By this I know the Prince of this world is judged.

Thus, I say, may we suppose that soul to triumph, in which the promise of the text is happily fulfilled. And though, at the beginning of this discourse, I said, most had never experienced any thing of this, and that therefore this preaching must be foolishness to such; yet I doubt not but there are some few happy souls, who, through grace, have been enabled

to

to follow me ſtep by ſtep; and notwithſtanding the Holy Ghoſt might not directly work in the ſame order as I have deſcribed, and perhaps they cannot exactly ſay the time when, yet they have a well-grounded confidence that the work is done, and that they have really been convinced of ſin, righteouſneſs and judgment in ſome way, or at ſome time or another.

And now, what ſhall I ſay to you? O thank GOD, thank the LORD JESUS, thank the ever-bleſſed Trinity, for this unſpeakable gift: for you would never have been thus highly favoured, had not he who firſt ſpoke darkneſs into light, loved you with an everlaſting love, and enlightened you by his Holy Spirit, and that too, not on account of any good thing foreſeen in you, but for his own name's ſake.

Be humble therefore, O believers, be humble: look to the rock from whence you have been hewn: extol free grace; admire electing love, which alone has made you to differ from the reſt of your brethren. Has GOD brought you into light? Walk as becometh children of light. Provoke not the Holy Spirit to depart from you: for though he hath ſealed you to the day of redemption, and you know that the Prince of this world is judged; yet if you backſlide, grow luke-warm, or forget your firſt love, the LORD will viſit your offences with the rod of affliction, and your ſin with ſpiritual ſcourges. Be not therefore high-minded, but fear. Rejoice, but let it be with trembling. As the elect of GOD, put on, not only humbleneſs of mind, but bowels of compaſſion; and pray, O pray for your unconverted brethren! Help me, help me now, O children of GOD, and hold up my hands, as *Aaron* and *Hur* once held up the hands of *Moſes*. Pray, whilſt I am preaching, that the LORD may enable me to ſay, This day is the promiſe in the text fulfilled in ſome poor ſinners hearts. Cry mightily to GOD, and, with the cords of holy violence, pull down bleſſings on your neighbours heads. CHRIST yet lives and reigns in heaven: the reſidue of the Spirit is yet in his hand, and a plentiful effuſion of it is promiſed in the latter days of the church. And O that the Holy Ghoſt, the bleſſed Comforter, would now come down, and convince thoſe that are Chriſtleſs amongſt you, of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment!

judgment! O that you were once made willing to be convinced!

But perhaps you had rather be filled with wine than with the Spirit, and are daily chaſing that Holy Ghoſt from your ſouls. What ſhall I ſay for you to GOD? "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." What ſhall I ſay from GOD to you? Why? That "GOD was in CHRIST reconciling the world unto himſelf:" Therefore I beſeech you, as in CHRIST's ſtead, be ye reconciled to GOD. Do not go away contradicting and blaſpheming. I know *Satan* would have you be gone. Many of you may be uneaſy, and are ready to cry out, "What a wearineſs is this!" But I will not let you go: I have wreſtled with GOD for my hearers in private, and I muſt wreſtle with you here in public. Though of myſelf I can do nothing, and you can no more by your own power come to and believe on CHRIST, than *Lazarus* could come forth from the grave; yet who knows but GOD may beget ſome of you again to a lively hope by this fooliſhneſs of preaching, and that you may be ſome of that world, which the Comforter is to convince of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment? Poor Chriſtleſs ſouls! do you know what a condition you are in? Why, you are lying in the wicked one, the devil; he rules in you, he walks and dwells in you, unleſs you dwell in CHRIST, and the Comforter is come into your hearts. And will you contentedly lie in that wicked one the devil? What wages will he give you? Eternal death. O that you would come to CHRIST! The free gift of GOD through him is eternal life. He will accept of you even now, if you will believe in him. The Comforter may yet come into your hearts, even yours. All that are now his living temples, were once lying in the wicked one, as well as you. This bleſſed gift, this Holy Ghoſt, the bleſſed JESUS received even for the rebellious.

I ſee many of you affected: but are your paſſions only a little wrought upon, or are your ſouls really touched with a lively ſenſe of the heinouſneſs of your ſins, your want of faith, and the precioufneſs of the righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST? If ſo, I hope the LORD has been gracious, and that the Comforter is coming into your hearts. Do not ſtifle theſe convictions!

victions! Do not go away, and ſtraightway forget what manner of doctrine you have heard, and thereby ſhew that theſe are only common workings of a few tranſient convictions, floating upon the ſurface of your hearts. Beg of GOD that you may be ſincere (for he alone can make you ſo) and that you may indeed deſire the promiſe of the text to be fulfilled in your ſouls. Who knows but the LORD may be gracious? Remember you have no plea but ſovereign mercy; but, for your encouragement alſo, remember it is the world, ſuch as you are, to whom the Comforter is to come, and whom he is to convince; wait therefore at wiſdom's gates. The bare probability of having a door of mercy opened, is enough to keep you ſtriving. CHRIST JESUS came into the world to ſave ſinners, the chief of them: you know not but he came to ſave you. Do not go and quarrel with GOD's decrees, and ſay, if I am a reprobate, I ſhall be damned; if I am elected, I ſhall be ſaved; and therefore I will do nothing. What have you to do with GOD's decrees? Secret things belong to to him; it is your buſineſs to "give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure." If there are but few who find the way that leads to life, do you ſtrive to be ſome of them; you know not but you may be in the number of thoſe few, and that your ſtriving may be the means which GOD intends to bleſs, to give you an entrance in. If you do not act thus, you are not ſincere; and, if you do, who knows but you may find mercy? For though, after you have done all that you can, GOD may juſtly cut you off, yet never was a ſingle perſon damned who did all that he could. Though therefore your hands are withered, ſtretch them out; though you are impotent, ſick, and lame, come, lie at the pool. Who knows but by and by the LORD JESUS may have compaſſion on you, and ſend the Comforter to convince you of ſin, righteouſneſs, and of judgment? He is a GOD full of compaſſion and long-ſuffering, otherwiſe you and I had been long ſince lifting up our eyes in torments. But ſtill he is patient with us!

O Chriſtleſs ſinners, you are alive, and who knows but GOD intends to bring you to repentance? Could my prayers or tears effect it, you ſhould have vollies of the one, and floods of the other. My heart is touched with a ſenſe of your con-

dition: May our merciful High-prieſt now ſend down the Comforter, and make you ſenſible of it alſo! O the love of CHRIST! It conſtrains me yet to beſeech you to come to him; what do you reject, if you reject CHRIST, the LORD of glory! Sinners, give the dear Redeemer a lodging in your ſouls. Do not be *Bethſhemites*; give CHRIST your hearts, your whole hearts. Indeed he is worthy. He made you, and not you yourſelves. You are not your own; give CHRIST then your bodies and ſouls, which are his! Is it not enough to melt you down, to think that the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, ſhould condeſcend to invite you by his miniſters? How ſoon can he frown you to hell? And how know you, but he may, this very inſtant, if you do not hear his voice? Did any yet harden their hearts againſt CHRIST, and proſper? Come then, do not ſend me ſorrowful away: do not let me have reaſon to cry out, O my leanneſs, my leanneſs! Do not let me go weeping into my cloſet, and ſay, "LORD, they will not believe my report; LORD, I have called them, and they will not anſwer; I am unto them as a very pleaſant ſong, and as one that plays upon a pleaſant inſtrument; but their hearts are running after the luſt of the eye, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life." Would you be willing that I ſhould give ſuch an account of you, or make ſuch a prayer before GOD? And yet I muſt not only do ſo here, but appear in judgment againſt you hereafter, unleſs you will come to CHRIST. Once more therefore I intreat you to come. What objections have you to make? Behold, I ſtand here in the name of GOD, to anſwer all that you can offer. But I know no one can come, unleſs the Father draw him; I will therefore addreſs me to my GOD, and intercede with him to ſend the Comforter into your hearts.

O bleſſed JESUS, who art a GOD whoſe compaſſions fail not, and in whom all the promiſes are yea and amen; thou that ſitteſt between the cherubims, ſhew thyſelf amongſt us. Let us now ſee thy outgoings! O let us now taſte that thou art gracious, and reveal thy almighty arm! Get thyſelf the victory in theſe poor ſinners hearts. Let not the word ſpoken prove like water ſpilt upon the ground. Send down,

ſend

ſend down, O great High-prieſt, the Holy Spirit, to convince the world of ſin, of righteouſneſs, and of judgment. So will we give thanks and praiſe to thee, O Father, thee O Son, and thee O bleſſed Spirit; to whom, as three Perſons, but one GOD, be aſcribed by angels and archangels, by cherubims and ſeraphims, and all the heavenly hoſts, all poſſible power, might, majeſty, and dominion, now and for evermore. Amen, Amen, Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XLI.

Saul's Converſion.

ACTS ix. 22.

But Saul increaſed the more in ſtrength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damaſcus, proving that this is very CHRIST.

IT is an undoubted truth, however paradoxical it may ſeem to natural men, that "whoſoever will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhall ſuffer perſecution." And therefore it is very remarkable, that our bleſſed LORD, in his glorious ſermon on the mount, after he had been pronouncing thoſe bleſſed, who were poor in ſpirit, meek, pure in heart, and ſuch like, immediately adds (and ſpends no leſs than three verſes in this beatitude "Bleſſed are they who are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake." No one ever was, or ever will be endowed with the forementioned graces in any degree, but he will be perſecuted for it in a meaſure. There is an irreconcileable enmity between the ſeed of the woman, and the ſeed of the ſerpent. And if we are not of the world, but ſhew by our fruits that we are of the number of thoſe whom JESUS CHRIST has choſen out of the world, for that very reaſon the world will hate us. As this is true of every particular chriſtian, ſo it is true of every chriſtian church in general. For ſome years paſt we have heard but little of a public perſecution: Why? Becauſe but little of the power of godlineſs has prevailed amongſt all denominations. The ſtrong man armed has had full poſſeſſion of moſt profeſſors hearts, and therefore he has let them reſt in a falſe peace. But we may aſſure ourſelves, when JESUS CHRIST begins to gather in

in his elect in any remarkable manner, and opens an effectual door for preaching the everlaſting goſpel, perſecution will flame out, and *Satan* and his emiſſaries will do their utmoſt (though all in vain) to ſtop the work of GOD. Thus it was in the firſt ages, thus it is in our days, and thus it will be, till time ſhall be no more.

Chriſtians and chriſtian churches muſt then expect enemies. Our chief concern ſhould be, to learn how to behave towards them in a chriſtian manner: For, unleſs we take good heed to ourſelves, we ſhall imbitter our ſpirits, and act unbecoming the followers of that LORD, "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuffered, threatned not; and, as a lamb before his ſhearers is dumb, ſo opened he not his mouth." But what motive ſhall we make uſe of to bring ourſelves to this bleſſed lamb-like temper? Next to the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit upon our hearts, I know of no conſideration more conducive to teach us long-ſuffering towards our moſt bitter perſecutors, than this, "That, for all we know to the contrary, ſome of thoſe very perſons, who are now perſecuting, may be choſen from all eternity by GOD, and hereafter called in time, to edify and build up the church of CHRIST."

The perſecutor *Saul*, mentioned in the words of the text, (and whoſe converſion, GOD willing, I propoſe to treat on in the following diſcourſe) is a noble inſtance of this kind.

I ſay, a perſecutor, and that a bloody one: For ſee how he is introduced in the beginning of this chapter; "And *Saul* yet breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the diſciples of our LORD, went unto the high prieſt, and deſired of him letters to *Damaſcus* to the ſynagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to *Jeruſalem*."

"And *Saul* yet breathing out." This implies that he had been a perſecutor before. To prove which, we need only look back to the 7th chapter, where we ſhall find him ſo very remarkably active at *Stephen's* death, that "the witneſſes laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whoſe name was *Saul*." He ſeems, though young, to be in ſome authority. Perhaps, for his zeal againſt the chriſtians, he was preferred in the church, and was allowed to ſit in the great council or

Sanhedrim.

Sanhedrim? For we are told, chap. viii. ver. 1. "That *Saul* was conſenting unto his death;" and again, at ver. 3. he is brought in as exceeding all in his oppoſition; for thus ſpeaks the evangeliſt, "As for *Saul*, he made havock of the church, entring into every houſe, and haling men and women, committed them to priſon." One would have imagined, that this ſhould have ſatisfied, at leaſt abated the fury of this young zealot. No: being exceedingly mad againſt them, as he himſelf informs *Agrippa*, and having made havock of all in *Jeruſalem*, he now is reſolved to perſecute the diſciples of the LORD, even to ſtrange cities; and therefore yet breathing out threatnings. "Breathing out." The words are very emphatical, and expreſſive of his bitter enmity. It was as natural to him now to threaten the chriſtians, as it was for him to breathe: he could ſcarce ſpeak, but it was ſome threatnings againſt them. Nay, he not only breathed out threatnings, but ſlaughters alſo (and thoſe who threaten, would alſo ſlaughter, if it were in their power) againſt the diſciples of the LORD. Inſatiable therefore as hell, finding he could not confute or ſtop the chriſtians by force of argument, he is reſolved to do it by force of arms; and therefore went to the high prieſt (for there never was a perſecution yet without a high prieſt at the head of it) and deſired of him letters, iſſued out of his ſpiritual court, to the ſynagogues or eccleſiaſtical courts at *Damaſcus*, giving him authority, "that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto *Jeruſalem*," I ſuppoſe, there to be arraigned and condemned in the high prieſt's court. Obſerve how he ſpeaks of the chriſtians. *Luke*, who wrote the *Acts*, calls them "diſciples of the LORD," and *Saul* ſtiles them "Men and women of this way." I doubt not but he repreſented them as a company of *upſtart enthuſiaſts*, that had lately gotten into a new method or way of living; that would not be content with the temple-ſervice, but they muſt be righteous over-much, and have their private meetings or conventicles, and break bread, as they called it, from houſe to houſe, to the great diſturbance of the eſtabliſhed clergy, and to the utter ſubverſion of all order and decency. I do not hear that the high prieſt makes any objection: no, he was as willing to grant letters, as *Saul* was to aſk them; and won-

derfully pleaſed within himſelf, to find he had ſuch an active zealot to employ againſt the chriſtians.

Well then, a judicial proceſs is immediately iſſued out, with the high prieſt's ſeal affixed to it. And now methinks I ſee the young perſecutor finely equipped, and pleaſing himſelf with thoughts, how triumphantly he ſhould ride back with the "men and women of this way," dragging them after him to *Jeruſalem*.

What a condition may we imagine the poor diſciples at *Damaſcus* were in at this time! No doubt they had heard of *Saul*'s impriſoning and making havock of the ſaints at *Jeruſalem*, and we may well ſuppoſe they were appriſed of his deſign againſt them. I am perſuaded this was a growing, becauſe a trying time with theſe dear people. O how did they wreſtle with GOD in prayer, beſeeching him either to deliver them from, or give them grace ſufficient to enable them to bear up under, the fury of their perſecutors? The high prieſt doubtleſs with the reſt of his reverend brethren, flattered themſelves, that they ſhould now put an effectual ſtop to this growing hereſy, and waited with impatience for *Saul*'s return.

But "He that ſitteth in heaven laughs them to ſcorn, the LORD has them in deriſion." And therefore, ver. 3. "As *Saul* journeyed, and came even near unto *Damaſcus*," perhaps to the very gates, (our LORD permitting this, to try the faith of his diſciples, and more conſpicuouſly to baffle the deſigns of his enemies) "ſuddenly (at mid-day, as he acquaints *Agrippa*) there ſhined round about him a light from heaven," a light brighter than the ſun; "and he fell to the earth (why not into hell?) and heard a voice ſaying unto him, *Saul, Saul*, why perſecuteſt thou me?" The word is doubled, "*Saul, Saul*?" Like that of our LORD to *Martha*; "*Martha, Martha*;" or the prophet, "O earth, earth, earth!" Perhaps theſe words came like thunder to his ſoul. That they were ſpoken audibly, we are aſſured from verſe 7. "His companions heard the voice." Our LORD now arreſts the perſecuting zealot, calling him by name; for the word never does us good, till we find it ſpoken to us in particular. "*Saul, Saul*, Why perſecuteſt thou Me?" Put the emphaſis upon the word *why*, what evil have I done? Put it upon the word *perſecuteſt*,

cuteſt, why perſecuteſt? I ſuppoſe *Saul* thought he was not perſecuting; no, he was only putting the laws of the eccleſiaſtical court into execution; but JESUS, whoſe eyes are as a flame of fire, ſaw through the hypocriſy of his heart, that, notwithſtanding his ſpecious pretences, all this proceeded from a perſecuting ſpirit, and ſecret enmity of heart againſt GOD; and therefore ſays, "Why perſecuteſt thou me?" Put the emphaſis upon the word *me*, why perſecuteſt thou me? alas! *Saul* was not perſecuting CHRIST, was he? he was only taking care to prevent innovations in the church, and bringing a company of enthuſiaſts to juſtice, who otherwiſe would overturn the eſtabliſhed conſtitution. But JESUS ſays, "Why perſecuteſt thou me?" For what is done to CHRIST's diſciples, he takes as done to himſelf, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. He that touches CHRIST's diſciples, touches the apple of his eye; and they who perſecute the followers of our LORD, would perſecute our LORD himſelf, was he again to come and tabernacle amongſt us.

I do not find that *Saul* gives any reaſon why he did perſecute; no, he was ſtruck dumb; as every perſecutor will be, when JESUS CHRIST puts this ſame queſtion to them at the terrible day of judgment. But being pricked at the heart, no doubt with a ſenſe not only of this, but of all his other offences againſt the great GOD, he ſaid, ver. 5. "Who art thou, LORD?" See how ſoon GOD can change the heart and voice of his moſt bitter enemies. Not many days ago, *Saul* was not only blaſpheming CHRIST himſelf; but, as much as in him lay, compelling others to blaſpheme alſo: but now, he, who before was an impoſtor, is called *Lord*; "Who art thou, LORD?" This admirably points out the way in which GOD's Spirit works upon the heart: it firſt powerfully convinces of ſin, and of our damnable ſtate; and then puts us upon enquiring after JESUS CHRIST. *Saul* being ſtruck to the ground, or pricked to the heart, cries out after JESUS, "Who art thou, LORD?" As many of you that were never ſo far made ſenſible of your damnable ſtate, as to be made feelingly to ſeek after JESUS CHRIST, were never yet truly convicted by, much leſs converted to, GOD. May the LORD, who ſtruck *Saul*, effectually now ſtrike all my chriſtleſs hearers, and ſet them upon enquiring after JESUS, as their all in all! *Saul* ſaid, "Who art thou,

LORD? And the LORD ſaid, I am JESUS, whom thou perſecuteſt" Never did any one enquire truly after JESUS CHRIST, but CHRIST made a ſaving diſcovery of himſelf, to his ſoul. It ſhould ſeem, our LORD appeared to him in perſon; for *Ananias*, afterwards, ſays, "The LORD who appeared to thee in the way which thou cameſt;" though this may only imply CHRIST's meeting him in the way; it is not much matter: it is plain CHRIST here ſpeaks to him, and ſays, "I am JESUS, whom thou perſecuteſt." It is remarkable, how our LORD takes to himſelf the name of *Jeſus*; for it is a name in which he delights: I am JESUS, a Saviour of my people, both from the guilt and power of their ſins; "a JESUS, whom thou perſecuteſt." This ſeems to be ſpoken to convince *Saul* more and more of his ſin; and I doubt not, but every word was ſharper than a two edged ſword, and came like ſo many daggers to his heart; O how did theſe words affect him! a JESUS! a Saviour! and yet I am perſecuting him! this ſtrikes him with horror; but then the word JESUS, though he was a perſecutor, might give him ſome hope. However, our dear LORD, to convince *Saul* that he was to be ſaved by grace, and that he was not afraid of his power and enmity, tells him, "It is hard for thee to kick againſt the pricks." As much as to ſay, though he was perſecuting, yet he could not overthrow the church of CHRIST: for he would ſit as King upon his holy hill of *Zion*; the malice of men or devils ſhould never be able to prevail againſt him.

Ver. 6. "And he, trembling and aſtoniſhed, ſaid, LORD, what wilt thou have me to do?" Thoſe, who think *Saul* had a diſcovery of JESUS made to his heart before, think that this queſtion is the reſult of his faith, and that he now deſires to know what he ſhall do, out of gratitude, for what the LORD had done for his ſoul; in this ſenſe it may be underſtood; * and I have made uſe of it as an inſtance to prove, that faith will work by love; but perhaps it may be more agreeable to the context, if we ſuppoſe, that *Saul* had only ſome diſtant diſcovery of CHRIST made to him, and not a full aſſurance of faith: for we are told, "he trembling and aſtoniſhed," trembling at the thoughts of his perſecuting a JESUS, and aſtoniſhed at his own vileneſs, and the infinite condeſcenſion of this

* See VOL. V. Sermon 24.

JESUS, cries out, "LORD, what wilt thou have me to do?" Perſons under ſoul-trouble, and ſore conviction, would be glad to do any thing, or comply on any terms, to get peace with GOD. "Ariſe, (ſays our LORD) and go into the city, and it ſhall be told thee what thou ſhalt do."

And here we will leave *Saul* a while, and ſee what is become of his companions. But what ſhall we ſay? GOD is a ſovereign agent; his ſacred Spirit bloweth when and where it liſteth; "he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." *Saul* is taken, but, as far as we know to the contrary, his fellow-travellers are left to periſh in their ſins: for we are told, ver. 7. "That the men who journeyed with him ſtood, indeed, ſpeechleſs, and hearing a confuſed voice;" I ſay, a *confuſed voice*, for ſo the word ſignifies, and muſt be ſo interpreted, in order to reconcile it with chap. xxii. ver. 9. where *Saul*, giving an account of theſe men, tells *Agrippa*, "They heard not the voice of him that ſpake to me." They heard a voice, a confuſed noiſe, but not the articulate voice of him that ſpake to *Saul*, and therefore remained unconverted. For what are all ordinances, all, even the moſt extraordinary diſpenſations of providence, without CHRIST ſpeaks to the ſoul in them? Thus it is now under the word preached: many, like *Saul*'s companions, are ſometimes ſo ſtruck with the outgoings of GOD appearing in the ſanctuary, that they even ſtand ſpeechleſs; they hear the preacher's voice, but not the voice of the Son of GOD, who, perhaps, at the ſame time is ſpeaking effectually to many other hearts; this I have known often; and what ſhall we ſay to theſe things? O the depth of the ſovereignty of GOD! it is paſt finding out. LORD, I deſire to adore what I cannot comprehend. "Even ſo, Father, for ſo it ſeemeth good in thy ſight!"

But to return to *Saul:* the LORD bids him "ariſe and go into the city;" and we are told, ver. 8. that "*Saul* aroſe from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, (he was ſo overpowered with the greatneſs of the light that ſhone upon them, that) he ſaw no man; but they led him by the hand, and brought him into *Damaſcus*," that very city which was to be the place of his executing or impriſoning the diſciples of the LORD. "And he was three days without ſight, and neither did eat nor drink." But who can tell what horrors of

conſcience, what convulſions of ſoul, what deep and pungent convictions of ſin he underwent during theſe three long days? it was this took away his appetite (for who can eat or drink when under a ſenſe of the wrath of GOD for ſin?) and, being to be greatly employed hereafter, he muſt be greatly humbled now; therefore, the LORD leaves him three days groaning under the ſpirit of bondage, and buffeted, no doubt, with the fiery darts of the devil, that, being tempted like unto his brethren, he might be able hereafter to ſuccour thoſe that were tempted. Had *Saul* applied to any of the blind guides of the *Jewiſh* church, under theſe circumſtances, they would have ſaid, he was mad, or going beſides himſelf; as many carnal teachers and blind Phariſees now deal with, and ſo more and more diſtreſs, poor ſouls labouring under awakening convictions of their damnable ſtate. But GOD often at our firſt awakenings, viſits us with ſore trials, eſpecially thoſe who are, like *Saul*, to ſhine in the church, and to be uſed as inſtruments in bringing many ſons to glory: thoſe who are to be highly exalted, muſt firſt be deeply humbled; and this I ſpeak for the comfort of ſuch, who may be now groaning under the ſpirit of bondage, and perhaps, like *Saul*, can neither eat nor drink; for I have generally obſerved, that thoſe who have had the deepeſt convictions, have afterwards been favoured with the moſt precious communications, and enjoyed moſt of the divine preſence in their ſouls. This was afterwards remarkably exemplified in *Saul*, who was three days without ſight, and neither did eat nor drink.

But will the LORD leave his poor ſervant in this diſtreſs? no; his JESUS (though *Saul* perſecuted him) promiſed (and he will perform) that "it ſhould be told him what he muſt do. And there was a certain diſciple at *Damaſcus*, named *Ananias*; and unto him, ſaid the LORD, in a viſion, *Ananias*; and he ſaid, Behold, I am here, LORD." What a holy familiarity is there between JESUS CHRIST and regenerate ſouls! *Ananias* had been uſed to ſuch love-viſits, and therefore knew the voice of his beloved. The LORD ſays, "*Ananias*;" *Ananias* ſays, "Behold, I am here, LORD." Thus it is that CHRIST now, as well as formerly, often talks with his children at ſundry times and after divers manners, as a man talketh with his friend. But what has the LORD to ſay to *Ananias?*

Ver. 11.

Ver. 11. "And the LORD ſaid unto him, Ariſe, and go into the ſtreet, which is called *Straight*, and enquire in the houſe of *Judas*, for one called *Saul* of *Tarſus*;" (See here for your comfort, O children of the moſt high GOD, what notice JESUS CHRIST takes of the ſtreet and the houſe where his own dear ſervants lodge) "for behold, he prayeth;" but why is this uſhered in with the word *behold?*, what, was it ſuch a wonder, to hear that *Saul* was praying? why, *Saul* was a Phariſee, and therefore, no doubt, faſted and made long prayers: and, ſince we are told that he profited above many of his equals, I doubt not but he was taken notice of for his gift in prayer; and yet it ſeems, that before theſe three days, *Saul* never prayed in his life; and why? becauſe, before theſe three days, he never felt himſelf a condemned creature: he was alive in his own opinion, becauſe without a knowledge of the ſpiritual meaning of the law; he felt not a want of, and therefore, before now, cried not after a JESUS; and conſequently, though he might have ſaid or made a prayer (as many Phariſees do now-a-days) he never prayed a prayer; but now, "behold! he prayed indeed;" and this was urged as one reaſon why he was converted. None of GOD's children, as one obſerves, comes into the world ſtill-born; prayer is the very breath of the new creature; and therefore, if we are prayerleſs, we are chriſtleſs; if we never had the ſpirit of ſupplication, it is a ſad ſign that we never had the ſpirit of grace in our ſouls: and you may be aſſured you never did pray, unleſs you have felt yourſelves ſinners, and ſeen the want of JESUS to be your Saviour. May the LORD, whom I ſerve in the goſpel of his dear Son, prick you all to the heart, and may it be ſaid of you all, as it was of *Saul*, behold, they pray!

The LORD goes on to encourage *Ananias* to go to *Saul*: ſays he, ver. 12. "For he hath ſeen in a viſion a man named *Ananias*, coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his ſight." So that though CHRIST converted *Saul* immediately by himſelf, yet he will carry on the work, thus begun, by a miniſter. Happy they, who under ſoul-troubles have ſuch experienced guides, and as well acquainted with JESUS CHRIST as *Ananias* was; you that have ſuch, make much of and be thankful for them; and you who have

them not, truſt in GOD; he will carry on his own work without them.

Doubtleſs, *Ananias* was a good man; but ſhall I commend him for his anſwer to our LORD? I commend him not: for ſays he, ver. 13. "LORD, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy ſaints at *Jeruſalem:* And here, he hath authority from the chief prieſts to bind all that call upon thy name." I fear this anſwer proceeded from ſome relicks of ſelf-righteouſneſs, as well as infidelity, that lay undiſcovered in the heart of *Ananias.* "Ariſe, (ſaid our LORD) and go into the ſtreet, which is called *Straight,* and enquire in the houſe of *Judas,* for one called *Saul* of *Tarſus*; for behold, he prayeth!" One would think this was ſufficient to ſatisfy him; but ſays *Ananias,* "LORD, I have heard by many of this man (he ſeems to ſpeak of him with much contempt; for even good men are apt to think too contemptuouſly of thoſe who are yet in their ſins) how much evil he hath done to thy ſaints in *Jeruſalem:* And here, he hath authority from the chief prieſts, to bind all that call upon thy name." And what then, *Ananias?* Is any thing too hard for the LORD? Who made thee to differ? Could not he who converted thee, convert him alſo? Surely *Ananias* here forgets himſelf, or perhaps fears, leſt this man, who had authority from the chief prieſts to bind all that call upon CHRIST's name, ſhould bind him alſo, if he went unto him; but the LORD ſilences all objections, with a "Go thy way, for he is a choſen veſſel unto me, to bear my name before the *Gentiles,* and kings, and the children of *Iſrael.* For I will ſhew him how great things he muſt ſuffer for my name's ſake." Here GOD ſtops his mouth immediately, by aſſerting his ſovereignty, and preaching to him the doctrine of election. And the frequent converſion of notorious ſinners to GOD, to me is one great proof, amongſt a thouſand others, of that precious, but too much exploded and ſadly miſrepreſented, doctrine of GOD's electing love; for whence is it that ſuch are taken, whilſt thouſands, not near ſo vile, die ſenſeleſs and ſtupid? All the anſwer that can be given, is, *they are choſen veſſels*; "Go thy way, (ſays GOD) for he is a choſen veſſel unto me, to bear my name before the *Gentiles,* and kings, and the children of *Iſrael:* For I will ſhew him how great things he muſt ſuffer for my name's ſake."

ſake." Obſerve what a cloſe connection there is between doing and ſuffering for CHRIST. If any of my brethren in the miniſtry are preſent, let them hear what preferment we muſt expect, if we are called out to work remarkably for GOD: not great prebendaries or biſhopricks, but great ſufferings for our LORD's name ſake; theſe are the fruits of our labour: and he that will not contentedly ſuffer great things for preaching CHRIST, is not worthy of him. Suffering will be found to be the beſt preferment, when we are called to give an account of our miniſtry at the great day.

I do not hear, that *Ananias* quarrelled with GOD concerning the doctrine of election; no, (O that all good men would, in this, learn of him!) "He went his way, and entered into the houſe; and put his hands on him, and ſaid, Brother *Saul*;" juſt now, it was *this man*; now it is *brother Saul:* it is no matter what a man has been, if he be now a chriſtian; the ſame ſhould be our brother, our ſiſter and mother; GOD blots out every convert's tranſgreſſions as with a thick cloud, and ſo ſhould we; the more vile a man has been, the more ſhould we love him when believing in CHRIST, becauſe CHRIST will be more glorified on his behalf. I doubt not, but *Ananias* was wonderfully delighted to hear that ſo remarkable a perſecutor was brought home to GOD: I am perſuaded he felt his ſoul immediately united to him by love, and therefore addreſſes him not with, thou perſecutor, thou murderer, that cameſt to butcher me and my friends; but, "brother *Saul.*" It is remarkable that the primitive chriſtians much uſed the word *brother* and *brethren*; I know it is a term now much in reproach; but thoſe who deſpiſe it, I believe, would be glad to be of our brotherhood, when they ſee us ſitting at the right-hand of the Majeſty on high. "Brother *Saul*, the LORD (even JESUS that appeared unto thee in the way as thou cameſt) hath ſent me, that thou mighteſt receive thy ſight, and be filled with the Holy Ghoſt." At this time, we may ſuppoſe, he laid his hands upon him. See the conſequences.

Ver. 18. "Immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been ſcales, and he received ſight forthwith;" not only bodily, but ſpiritual ſight; he emerged as it were into a new world; he ſaw, and felt too, things unutterable: he felt a union of ſoul with GOD; he received the ſpirit of adoption; he could now,

now, with a full assurance of faith, cry, "Abba, Father." Now was he filled with the Holy Ghost; and had the love of God shed abroad in his heart; now were the days of his mourning ended; now was Christ formed in his soul; now he could give men and devils the challenge, knowing that Christ had justified him; now he saw the excellencies of Christ, and esteemed him the fairest among ten thousand. You only know how to sympathize with the apostle in his joy, who, after a long night of bondage, have been set free by the Spirit, and have received joy in the Holy Ghost. May all that are now mourning, as *Saul* was, be comforted in like manner!

The scales are now removed from the eyes of *Saul*'s mind; *Ananias* has done that for him, under God: he must now do another office, baptize him, and so receive him into the visible church of Christ; a good proof to me of the necessity of baptism where it may be had: for I find here, as well as elsewhere, that baptism is administered even to those who had received the Holy Ghost; *Saul* was convinced of this, and therefore arose and was baptized; and now it is time for him to recruit the outward man, which, by three days abstinence and spiritual conflicts, had been much impaired: we are therefore told, (ver. 19.) "when he had received meat, he was strengthened."

But O, with what comfort did the apostle now eat his food! I am sure it was with singleness, I am persuaded also with gladness of heart; and why? he knew that he was reconciled to God; and, for my own part, did I not know how blind and flinty our hearts are by nature, I should wonder how any one could eat even his common food with any satisfaction, who has not some well-grounded hope of his being reconciled to God. Our Lord intimates thus much to us: for in his glorious prayer, after he has taught us to pray for our daily bread, immediately adds that petition, "Forgive us our trespasses;" as though our daily bread would do us no service, unless we were sensible of having the forgiveness of our sins.

To proceed: *Saul* hath received meat, and is strengthened; and whither will he go now? to see the brethren; "then was *Saul* certain days with the disciples that were at *Damascus*." If we know and love Christ, we shall also love and desire to

be

be acquainted with the brethren of CHRIST: we may generally know a man by his company. And though all are not ſaints that aſſociate with ſaints, (for tares will be always ſpringing up amongſt the wheat till the time of harveſt) yet, if we never keep company, but are ſhy and aſhamed of the deſpiſed children of GOD, it is a certain ſign we have not yet experimentally learned JESUS, or received him into our hearts. My dear friends, be not deceived; if we are friends to the Bridegroom, we ſhall be friends to the children of the Bridegroom. *Saul*, as ſoon as he was filled with the Holy Ghoſt, "was certain days with the diſciples that were at *Damaſcus*."

But who can tell what joy theſe diſciples felt when *Saul* came amongſt them! I ſuppoſe holy *Ananias* introduced him. Methinks I ſee the once perſecuting zealot, when they came to ſalute him with a holy kiſs, throwing himſelf upon each of their necks, weeping over them with floods of tears, and ſaying, "O my brother, O my ſiſter, Can you forgive me? "Can you give ſuch a wretch as I the right-hand of fellow-"ſhip, who intended to drag you behind me bound unto *Je-"ruſalem!*" Thus, I ſay, we may ſuppoſe *Saul* addreſſed himſelf to his fellow-diſciples; and I doubt not but they were as ready to forgive and forget as *Ananias* was, and ſaluted him with the endearing title of "brother *Saul*." Lovely was this meeting; ſo lovely, that it ſeemed *Saul* continued certain days with them, to communicate experiences, and to learn the way of GOD more perfectly; to pray for a bleſſing on his future miniſtry, and to praiſe CHRIST JESUS for what he had done for their ſouls. *Saul*, perhaps, had ſat certain years at the feet of *Gamaliel*, but undoubtedly learned more theſe certain days, than he had learned before in all his life. It pleaſes me to think how this great ſcholar is tranſformed by the renewing of his mind: What a mighty change was here! That ſo great a man as *Saul* was, both as to his ſtation in life, and internal qualifications, and ſuch a bitter enemy to the chriſtians; for him, I ſay, to go and be certain days with the people of *this mad way*, and to ſit quietly, and be taught of illiterate men, as many of theſe diſciples we may be ſure were; what a ſubſtantial proof was this of the reality of his converſion!

What

What a hurry and confuſion may we ſuppoſe the chief prieſts were now in! I warrant they were ready to cry out, What! is he alſo deceived? As for the common people, who knew not the law, and are accurſed, for them to be carried away, is no ſuch wonder; but for a man bred up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, for ſuch a ſcholar, ſuch an enemy to the cauſe as *Saul*; for him to be led away with a company of ſilly, deceived men and women, ſurely it is impoſſible: we cannot believe it. But *Saul* ſoon convinces them of the reality of his becoming a fool for CHRIST's ſake: for ſtraightway, inſtead of going to deliver the letters from the high prieſts, as they expected, in order to bring the diſciples that were at *Damaſcus* bound to *Jeruſalem*, "he preached CHRIST in the ſynagogues, that he is the Son of GOD." This was another proof of his being converted. He not only converſed with chriſtians in private, but he preached CHRIST publicly in the ſynagogues: eſpecially, he inſiſted on the divinity of our LORD, proving, notwithſtanding his ſtate of humiliation, that he was really the Son of GOD.

But why did *Saul* preach CHRIST thus? Becauſe he had felt the power of CHRIST upon his own ſoul. And here is the reaſon why CHRIST is ſo ſeldom preached, and his divinity ſo ſlightly inſiſted on in our ſynagogues: becauſe the generality of thoſe that pretend to preach him, never felt a ſaving work of converſion upon their own ſouls. How can they preach, unleſs they are firſt taught of, and then ſent by GOD? *Saul* did not preach CHRIST before he knew him; no more ſhould any one elſe. An unconverted miniſter, though he could ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels, will be but as a ſounding braſs and tinkling cymbal to thoſe whoſe ſenſes are exerciſed to diſcern ſpiritual things. Miniſters that are unconverted, may talk and declaim of CHRIST, and prove from books that he is the Son of GOD; but they cannot preach with the demonſtration of the Spirit and with power, unleſs they preach from experience, and have had a proof of his divinity, by a work of grace wrought upon their own ſouls. GOD forgive thoſe, who lay hands on an unconverted man, knowing that he is ſuch: I would not do it for a thouſand worlds. LORD JESUS, keep thy own faithful ſervants pure, and let them not be partakers of other mens ſins!

Such

Such an inſtance as was *Saul*'s converſion, we may be aſſured, muſt make a great deal of noiſe; and, therefore, no wonder we are told, ver. 21. "But all that heard him were amazed, and ſaid, Is not this he that deſtroyed them who called on this name in *Jeruſalem*, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound to the chief prieſts."

Thus it will be with all that appear publicly for JESUS CHRIST; and it is as impoſſible for a true chriſtian to be hid, as a city built upon a hill. Brethren, if you are faithful to, you muſt be reproached and have remarks made on you for CHRIST; eſpecially if you have been remarkably wicked before your converſion. Your friends will ſay, is not this he, or ſhe, who a little while ago would run to as great an exceſs of riot and vanity as the worſt of us all? What has turned your brain?—Or if you have been cloſe, falſe, formal hypocrites, as *Saul* was, they will wonder that you ſhould be ſo deceived, as to think you were not in a ſafe ſtate before. No doubt, numbers were ſurprized to hear *Saul*, who was touching the law blameleſs, affirm that he was in a damnable condition (as in all probability he did) a few days before.

Brethren, you muſt expect to meet with many ſuch difficulties as theſe. The ſcourge of the tongue, is generally the firſt croſs we are called to bear for the ſake of CHRIST. Let not, therefore, this move you: It did not intimidate, no, it rather encouraged *Saul:* ſays the text, "But *Saul* increaſed the more in ſtrength, and confounded the *Jews* who dwelt at *Damaſcus*, proving that this is very CHRIST." Oppoſition never yet did, nor ever will hurt a ſincere convert: Nothing like oppoſition to make the man of GOD perfect. None but a hireling, who careth not for the ſheep, will be affrighted at the approach or barking of wolves. CHRIST's miniſters are as bold as lions: it is not for ſuch men as they to flee.

And therefore (that I may draw towards a concluſion) let the miniſters and diſciples of CHRIST learn from *Saul*, not to fear men or their revilings; but, like him, increaſe in ſtrength, the more wicked men endeavour to weaken their hands. We cannot be chriſtians without being oppoſed: no; diſciples in general muſt ſuffer; miniſters in particular muſt ſuffer great things. But let not this move any of us from our ſtedfaſtneſs

in

in the goſpel. He that ſtood by and ſtrengthened *Saul*, will alſo ſtand by and ſtrengthen us: He is a GOD mighty to ſave all that put their truſt in him. If we look up with an eye of faith, we, as well as the firſt martyr *Stephen*, may ſee JESUS ſtanding at the right hand of GOD, ready to aſſiſt and protect us. Though the LORD's ſeat is in heaven, yet he has reſpect to his ſaints in an eſpecial manner, when ſuffering here on earth: then the Spirit of CHRIST and of glory reſts upon their ſouls. And, if I may ſpeak my own experience, "I never enjoy more rich communications from GOD, than when deſpiſed and rejected of men for the ſake of JESUS CHRIST." However little they may deſign it, my enemies are my greateſt friends. What I moſt fear, is a calm; but the enmity which is in the hearts of natural men againſt CHRIST, will not ſuffer them to be quiet long: No; as I hope the work of GOD will increaſe, ſo the rage of men and devils will increaſe alſo. Let us put on, therefore, the whole armour of GOD; let us not fear the face of men: "Let us fear him only, who can deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell:" I ſay unto you, let us fear him alone. You ſee how ſoon GOD can ſtop the fury of his enemies.

You have juſt now heard of a proud, powerful zealot ſtopt in his full career, ſtruck down to the earth with a light from heaven, converted by the almighty power of efficacious grace, and thereupon zealouſly promoting, nay, reſolutely ſuffering for, the faith, which once with threatenings and ſlaughters he endeavoured to deſtroy. Let this teach us to pity and pray for our LORD's moſt inveterate enemies. Who knows, but in anſwer thereunto, our LORD may give them repentance unto life? Moſt think, that CHRIST had reſpect to *Stephen's* prayer, when he converted *Saul*. Perhaps for this reaſon GOD ſuffers his adverſaries to go on, that his goodneſs and power may ſhine more bright in their converſion.

But let not the perſecutors of CHRIST take encouragement from this to continue in their oppoſition. Remember, though *Saul* was converted, yet the high prieſt, and *Saul's* companions, were left dead in treſpaſſes and ſins: And, if this ſhould be your caſe, you will of all men be moſt miſerable: for perſecutors have the loweſt place in hell. And, if *Saul* was ſtruck

to

to the earth by a light from heaven, how will you be able to ſtand before JESUS CHRIST, when he comes in terrible majeſty to take vengeance on all thoſe who have perſecuted his goſpel? Then the queſtion, "Why perſecuteſt thou me?" will cut you through and through. The ſecret enmity of your hearts ſhall be then detected before men and angels, and you ſhall be doomed to dwell in the blackneſs of darkneſs for evermore. Kiſs the Son, therefore, leſt he be angry: for even you may yet find mercy, if you believe on the Son of GOD: though you perſecute him, yet he will be your JESUS. I cannot deſpair of any of you, when I find a *Saul* among the diſciples at *Damaſcus*. What though your ſins are as ſcarlet, the blood of CHRIST ſhall waſh them as white as ſnow. Having much to be forgiven, deſpair not; only believe, and like *Saul*, of whom I have now been ſpeaking, love much. He counted himſelf the chiefeſt ſinner of all, and therefore laboured more abundantly than all.

Who is there among you fearing the LORD? Whoſe hearts hath the LORD now opened to hearken to the voice of his poor unworthy ſervant? Surely, the LORD will not let me preach in vain. Who is the happy ſoul that is this day to be waſhed in the blood of the Lamb? Will no poor ſinner take encouragement from *Saul* to come to JESUS CHRIST? You are all thronging round, but which of you will touch the LORD JESUS? What a comfort will it be to *Saul*, and to your own ſouls, when you meet him in heaven, to tell him, that hearing of his, was a means, under GOD, of your converſion! Doubtleſs it was written for the encouragement of all poor, returning ſinners; he himſelf tells us ſo: for "in me GOD ſhewed all long-ſuffering, that I might be an example to them that ſhould hereafter believe." Was *Saul* here himſelf, he would tell you ſo, indeed he would; but being dead, by this account of his converſion he yet ſpeaketh. O that GOD may ſpeak by it to your hearts! O that the arrows of GOD might this day ſtick faſt in your ſouls, and you made to cry out, "Who art thou, LORD?" Are there any ſuch amongſt you? Methinks I feel ſomething of what this *Saul* felt, when he ſaid, "I travail in birth again for you, till CHRIST be formed again in your hearts." O come, come away to JESUS, in

whom

whom *Saul* believed; and then I care not if the high-priests iſſue out never ſo many writs, or injuriouſly drag me to a priſon. The thoughts of being inſtrumental in ſaving you, will make me ſing praiſes even at midnight: And I know you will be my joy and crown of rejoicing, when I am delivered from this earthly priſon, and meet you in the kingdom of GOD hereafter.

Now to GOD, &c.

SERMON

SERMON XLII.

Marks of having received the Holy Ghoſt.

ACTS xix. 2.

Have ye received the Holy Ghoſt ſince ye believed?

TWO different ſignifications have been given of theſe words. Some have ſuppoſed, that the queſtion here put, is, Whether theſe diſciples, whom St. *Paul* found at *Epheſus*, had received the Holy Ghoſt by impoſition of hands in confirmation? Others think, theſe diſciples had been already baptized into *John*'s baptiſm; which not being attended with an immediate effuſion of the Holy Spirit, the Apoſtle here aſks them, Whether they had received the Holy Ghoſt by being baptized into JESUS CHRIST? And upon their anſwering in the negative, he firſt baptized, and then confirmed them in the name of the LORD JESUS.

Which of theſe interpretations is the moſt true, is neither eaſy nor very neceſſary to determine. However, as the words contain a moſt important enquiry, without any reference to the context, I ſhall from them,

Firſt, Shew who the Holy Ghoſt here ſpoken of, is; and that we muſt all receive him, before we can be ſtiled true believers.

Secondly, I ſhall lay down ſome ſcripture marks whereby we may know, whether we have thus received the Holy Ghoſt or not. And

Thirdly, By way of concluſion, addreſs myſelf to ſeveral diſtinct claſſes of profeſſors, concerning the doctrine that ſhall have been delivered.

Firſt, I am to ſhew who the Holy Ghoſt ſpoken of in the the text, is; and that we muſt all receive him before we can be ſtiled true believers.

By the Holy Ghoſt is plainly ſignified the Holy Spirit, the third Perſon in the ever-bleſſed Trinity, conſubſtantial and co-eternal with the Father and the Son, proceeding from, yet equal to them both. He is emphatically called Holy, becauſe infinitely holy in himſelf, and the author and finiſher of all holineſs in us.

This bleſſed Spirit, who once moved on the face of the great deep; who over-ſhadowed the bleſſed Virgin before that holy child was born of her; who deſcended in a bodily ſhape, like a dove, on our bleſſed LORD, when he came up out of the water at his baptiſm; and afterwards came down in fiery tongues on the heads of all his Apoſtles at the day of Pentecoſt: this is the Holy Ghoſt, who muſt move on the faces of our ſouls; this power of the Moſt High, muſt come upon us, and we muſt be baptized with his baptiſm and refining fire, before we can be ſtiled true members of CHRIST's myſtical body.

Thus ſays the Apoſtle *Paul*, "Know ye not that JESUS CHRIST is in you, (that is, by his Spirit) unleſs you are reprobates?" And, "If any man hath not the Spirit of CHRIST, he is none of his." And again, ſays St. *John*, "We know that we are his, by the Spirit that he hath given us."

It is not, indeed, neceſſary that we ſhould have the Spirit now given in that miraculous manner, in which he was at firſt given to our LORD's Apoſtles, by ſigns and wonders; but it is abſolutely neceſſary, that we ſhould receive the Holy Ghoſt in his ſanctifying graces, as really as they did: and ſo will it continue to be till the end of the world.

For thus ſtands the caſe between GOD and man: GOD at firſt made man upright, or as the ſacred Penman expreſſes it, "In the image of GOD made he man;" that is, his ſoul was the very copy, the tranſcript of the divine nature. He, who before, by his almighty fiat, ſpoke the world into being, breathed into man the breath of ſpiritual life, and his ſoul was adorned with a reſemblance of the perfections of Deity.

This

This was the finiſhing ſtroke of the creation: the perfection both of the moral and material world. And ſo near did man reſemble his divine Original, that GOD could not but rejoice and take pleaſure in his own likeneſs: And therefore we read, that when GOD had finiſhed the inanimate and brutiſh part of the creation, he looked upon it, and beheld it was *good*; but when that lovely, God-like creature man was made, behold it was *very good.*

Happy, unſpeakably happy muſt man needs be, when thus a partaker of the divine nature. And thus might he have ſtill continued, had he continued holy. But GOD placed him in a ſtate of probation, with a free grant to eat of every tree in the garden of *Eden*, except the tree of knowledge of good and evil: the day he ſhould eat thereof, he was ſurely to die; that is, not only to be ſubject to temporal, but ſpiritual death; and conſequently, to loſe that divine image, that ſpiritual life GOD had not long ſince breathed into him, and which was as much his happineſs as his glory.

Theſe, one would imagine, were eaſy conditions for a finite creature's happineſs to depend on. But man, unhappy man, being ſeduced by the devil, and deſiring, like him, to be equal with his Maker, did eat of the forbidden fruit; and thereby became liable to that curſe, which the eternal GOD, who cannot lie, had denounced againſt his diſobedience.

Accordingly we read, that ſoon after *Adam* had fallen, he complained that he was naked; naked, not only as to his body, but naked and deſtitute of thoſe divine graces which before decked and beautified his ſoul. The unhappy mutiny and diſorder which the viſible creation fell into, the briars and thorns which now ſprung up and overſpread the earth, were but poor emblems, lifeleſs repreſentations of that confuſion and rebellion, and thoſe divers luſts and paſſions which ſprung up in, and quite overwhelmed the ſoul of man immediately after the fall. Alas! he was now no longer the image of the inviſible GOD; but as he had imitated the devil's ſin, he became as it were a partaker of the devil's nature, and from an union with, ſunk into a ſtate of direct enmity againſt GOD.

Now in this dreadful diſordered condition, are all of us brought into the world: for as the root is, ſuch muſt the

branches be. Accordingly we are told, " That *Adam* begat a ſon in his own likeneſs;" or, with the ſame corrupt nature which he himſelf had, after he had eaten the forbidden fruit. And experience as well as ſcripture proves, that we alſo are altogether born in ſin and corruption; and therefore incapable, whilſt in ſuch a ſtate, to hold communion with GOD. For as light cannot have communion with darkneſs, ſo GOD can have no communion with ſuch polluted ſons of *Belial*.

Here then appears the end and deſign why CHRIST was manifeſt in the fleſh; to put an end to theſe diſorders, and to reſtore us to that primitive dignity in which we were at firſt created. Accordingly he ſhed his precious blood to ſatisfy his Father's juſtice for our ſins; and thereby alſo he procured for us the Holy Ghoſt, who ſhould once more re-inſtamp the divine image upon our hearts, and make us capable of living with and enjoying the bleſſed GOD.

This was the great end of our LORD's coming into the world; nay, this is the only end why the world itſelf is now kept in being. For as ſoon as a ſufficient number are ſanctified out of it, the heavens ſhall be wrapped up like a ſcroll, the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the earth, and all that therein is, ſhall be burnt up.

This ſanctification of the Spirit, is that new birth mentioned by our bleſſed LORD to *Nicodemus*, " without which we cannot ſee the kingdom of GOD." This is what St. *Paul* calls being " renewed in the ſpirit of our minds;" and it is the ſpring of that holineſs, without which no man ſhall ſee the LORD.

Thus then, it is undeniably certain, we muſt receive the Holy Ghoſt ere we can be ſtiled true members of CHRIST's myſtical body. I come in the

Second place to lay down ſome ſcriptural marks, whereby we may eaſily judge, whether we have thus received the Holy Ghoſt or not. And the

Firſt I ſhall mention, is, our having received a ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication; for that always accompanies the ſpirit of grace. No ſooner was *Paul* converted, but " behold he prayeth." And this was urged as an argument, to convince *Ananias* that he was converted. And GOD's elect are alſo ſaid to " cry to him day and night."

And

And ſince one great work of the Holy Spirit is to convince us of ſin, and to ſet us upon ſeeking pardon and renewing grace, through the all-ſufficient merits of a crucified Redeemer, whoſoever has felt the power of the world to come, awakening him from his ſpiritual lethargy, cannot but be always crying out, "LORD, what wouldſt thou have me to do?" Or, in the language of the importunate blind *Bartimeus*, "JESUS, thou Son of *David*, have mercy upon me."

The bleſſed JESUS, as he received the Holy Ghoſt without meaſure, ſo he evidenced it by nothing more, than his frequent addreſſes at the throne of grace. Accordingly we read, that he was often alone on the mountain praying; that he roſe a great while before day to pray: nay, that he ſpent whole nights in prayer. And whoſoever is made partaker of the ſame Spirit with the holy JESUS, will be of the ſame mind, and delight in nothing ſo much, as to "draw nigh unto GOD," and lift up holy hands and hearts in frequent and devout prayer.

It muſt be confeſſed, indeed, that this ſpirit of ſupplication is often as it were ſenſibly loſt, and decays, for ſome time, even in thoſe who have actually received the Holy Ghoſt. Through ſpiritual dryneſs and barrenneſs of ſoul, they find in themſelves a liſtleſneſs and backwardneſs to this duty of prayer; but then they eſteem it as their croſs, and ſtill perſevere in ſeeking JESUS, though it be ſorrowing: and their hearts, notwithſtanding, are fixed upon GOD, though they cannot exert their affections ſo ſtrongly as uſual, on account of that ſpiritual deadneſs, which GOD, for wiſe reaſons, has ſuffered to benumb their ſouls.

But as for the formal believer, it is not ſo with him: no; he either prays not at all, or if he does enter into his cloſet, it is with reluctance, out of cuſtom, or to ſatisfy the checks of his conſcience. Whereas the true believer can no more live without prayer, than without food day by day. And he finds his ſoul as really and perceptibly fed by the one, as his body is nouriſhed and ſupported by the other. A

Second ſcripture mark of our having received the Holy Ghoſt, is, Not committing ſin.

"Whoſoever is born of GOD, (ſays St. *John*) ſinneth not, neither can he ſin, becauſe his ſeed remaineth in him."

Neither can he ſin. This expreſſion does not imply the impoſſibility of a chriſtian's ſinning: for we are told, that "in many things we offend all:" It only means thus much; that a man who is really born again of GOD, doth not wilfully commit ſin, much leſs live in the habitual practice of it. For how ſhall he that is dead to ſin, as every converted perſon is, live any longer therein?

It is true, a man that is born again of GOD, may, through ſurprize, or the violence of a temptation, fall into an act of ſin: witneſs the adultery of *David*, and *Peter*'s denial of his Maſter. But then, like them, he quickly riſes again, goes out from the world, and weeps bitterly; waſhes the guilt of ſin away by the tears of a ſincere repentance, joined with faith in the blood of JESUS CHRIST; takes double heed to his ways for the future, and perfects holineſs in the fear of GOD.

The meaning of this expreſſion of the Apoſtle, that "a man who is born of GOD, cannot commit ſin," has been * fitly illuſtrated, by the example of a covetous worldling, to the general bent of whoſe inclinations, liberality and profuſeneſs are directly oppoſite: but if, upon ſome unexpected, ſudden occaſion, he does play the prodigal, he immediately repents him of his fault, and returns with double care to his niggardlineſs again. And ſo is every one that is born again: to commit ſin, is as contrary to the habitual frame and tendency of his mind, as generoſity is to the inclinations of a miſer; but if at any time, he is drawn into ſin, he immediately, with double zeal, returns to his duty, and brings forth fruits meet for repentance. Whereas, the unconverted ſinner is quite dead in treſpaſſes and ſins: or if he does abſtain from groſs acts of it, through worldly ſelfiſh motives, yet, there is ſome right eye he will not pluck out; ſome right-hand which he will not cut off; ſome ſpecious *Agag* that he will not ſacrifice for GOD; and thereby he is convinced that he is but a mere *Saul:* and conſequently, whatever pretenſions he may make to the contrary, he has not yet received the Holy Ghoſt. A

Third mark whereby we may know, whether or not we have received the Holy Ghoſt, is, Our conqueſt over the world.

* LAW's *Chriſtian Perfection.*

"For

"For whoſoever is born of GOD, (ſays the Apoſtle) overcometh the world." By the world, we are to underſtand, as St. *John* expreſſes it, "all that is in the world, the luſt of the eye, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life:" And by overcoming of it, is meant, our renouncing theſe, ſo as not to follow or be led by them: for whoſoever is born from above, has his affections ſet on things above: he feels a divine attraction in his ſoul, which forcibly draws his mind heavenwards; and as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, ſo doth it make his ſoul to long after the enjoyment of his GOD.

Not that he is ſo taken up with the affairs of another life, as to neglect the buſineſs of this: No; a truly ſpiritual man dares not ſtand any day idle; but then he takes care, though he laboureth for the meat which periſheth, firſt to ſecure that which endureth to everlaſting life. Or, if GOD has exalted him above his brethren, yet, like *Moſes*, *Joſeph*, and *Daniel*, he, notwithſtanding, looks upon himſelf as a ſtranger and pilgrim upon earth: having received a principle of new life, he walks by faith and not by ſight; and his hopes being full of immortality, he can look on all things here below as vanity and vexation of ſpirit: In ſhort, though he is in, yet he is not of the world; and as he was made for the enjoyment of GOD, ſo nothing but GOD can ſatisfy his ſoul.

The ever-bleſſed JESUS was a perfect inſtance of overcoming the world. For though he went about continually doing good, and always lived as in a preſs and throng; yet, wherever he was, his converſation tended heavenwards. In like manner, he that is joined to the LORD in one ſpirit, will ſo order his thoughts, words, and actions, that he will evidence to all, that his converſation is in heaven.

On the contrary, an unconverted man being of the earth, is earthy; and having no ſpiritual eye to diſcern ſpiritual things, he is always ſeeking for happineſs in this life, where it never was, will, or can be found. Being not born again from above, he is bowed down by a ſpirit of natural infirmity: the ſerpent's curſe becomes his choice, and he eats of the duſt of the earth all the days of his life. A

Fourth ſcripture mark of our having received the Holy Ghoſt, is, Our loving one another.

"We know (ſays St. *John*) we are paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren." "And by this (ſays CHRIST himſelf) ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one towards another." Love is the fulfilling of the goſpel, as well as of the law: for "GOD is love; and whoſoever dwelleth in love, dwelleth in GOD.

But by this love we are not to underſtand a ſoftneſs and tenderneſs of mere nature, or a love founded on worldly motives (for this a natural man may have); but a love of our brethren, proceeding from love towards GOD: loving all men in general, becauſe of their relation to GOD; and loving good men in particular, for the grace we ſee in them, and becauſe they love our LORD JESUS in ſincerity.

This is chriſtian charity, and that new commandment which CHRIST gave to his diſciples. *New*, not in its object, but in the motive and example whereon it is founded, even JESUS CHRIST. This is that love which the primitive chriſtians were ſo renowned for, that it became a proverb, *See how theſe chriſtians love one another*. And without this love, though we ſhould give all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to be burnt, it would profit us nothing.

Further, this love is not confined to any particular ſet of men, but is impartial and catholic: A love that embraces GOD's image wherever it beholds it, and that delights in nothing ſo much as to ſee CHRIST's kingdom come.

This is the love wherewith JESUS CHRIST loved mankind: He loved all, even the worſt of men, as appears by his weeping over the obſtinately perverſe; but wherever he ſaw the leaſt appearance of the divine likeneſs, that ſoul he loved in particular. Thus we read, that when he heard the young man ſay, "All theſe things have I kept from my youth," that ſo far he loved him. And when he ſaw any noble inſtance of faith, though in a Centurion and a *Syrophenician*, aliens to the commonwealth of *Iſrael*, how is he ſaid to marvel at, to rejoice in, ſpeak of, and commend it? So every ſpiritual diſciple of JESUS CHRIST will cordially embrace all who worſhip GOD in ſpirit and in truth, however they may differ as to the appendages of religion, and in things not eſſentially neceſſary to ſalvation.

I can-

I confeſs, indeed, that the heart of a natural man is not thus enlarged all at once; and a perſon may really have received the Holy Ghoſt, (as *Peter*, no doubt, had when he was unwilling to go to *Cornelius*) though he be not arrived to this: but then, where a perſon is truly in CHRIST, all narrowneſs of ſpirit decreaſes in him daily; the partition wall of bigotry and party zeal is broken down more and more; and the nearer he comes to heaven, the more his heart is enlarged with that love, which there will make no difference between any people, nation, or language, but we ſhall all, with one heart, and one voice, ſing praiſes to him that ſitteth upon the throne for ever. But I haſten to a

Fifth ſcripture mark, Loving our enemies.

"I ſay unto you, (ſays JESUS CHRIST) Love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to thoſe that hate you, and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you." And this duty of loving your enemies is ſo neceſſary, that without it, our righteouſneſs does not exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, or even of Publicans and ſinners: "For if you do good to them only, who do good to you, what do you more than others?" What do you extraordinary? "Do not even the Publicans the ſame?" And theſe precepts our LORD confirmed by his own example; when he wept over the bloody city; when he ſuffered himſelf to be led as a ſheep to the ſlaughter; when he made that mild reply to the traytor *Judas*, "*Judas*, betrayeſt thou the Son of man with a kiſs;" and more eſpecially, when in the agonies and pangs of death, he prayed for his very murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

This is a difficult duty to the natural man; but whoſoever is made partaker of the promiſe of the Spirit, will find it practicable and eaſy: for if we are born again of GOD, we muſt be like him, and conſequently delight to be perfect in this duty of doing good to our worſt enemies in the ſame manner, though not in the ſame degree as he is perfect: He ſends his rain on the evil and the good; cauſeth his ſun to ſhine on the juſt and unjuſt; and more eſpecially commended his love towards us, that whilſt we were his enemies, he ſent forth his Son, born of a woman, made under the law, that he might become a curſe for us.

Many

Many other marks are ſcattered up and down the ſcriptures, whereby we may know whether or not we have received the Holy Ghoſt: ſuch as, "to be carnally minded, is death, but to be ſpiritually minded is life and peace." "Now the fruits of the Spirit are joy, peace, long-ſuffering, meekneſs," with a multitude of texts to the ſame purpoſe. But, as moſt, if not all of them, are comprehended in the duties already laid down, I dare affirm, whoſoever upon an impartial examination, can find the aforeſaid marks on his ſoul, may be as certain, as though an angel was to tell him, that his pardon is ſealed in heaven.

As for my own part, I had rather ſee theſe divine graces, and this heavenly temper ſtamped upon my ſoul, than to hear an angel from heaven ſaying unto me, Son, be of good cheer, thy ſins are forgiven thee.

Theſe are infallible witneſſes; theſe are *Emmanuel*, GOD with and in us; theſe make up that white ſtone, which none knoweth, ſaving he who hath receiveth it; theſe are the earneſts of the heavenly inheritance in our hearts: In ſhort, theſe are glory begun, and are that good thing, that better part, and which if you continue to ſtir up this gift of GOD, neither men nor devils ſhall ever be able to take from us.

I proceed, as was propoſed, in the *Third* place, to make an application of the doctrine delivered, to ſeveral diſtinct claſſes of profeſſors. And

Firſt, I ſhall addreſs myſelf to thoſe who are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins. And, O how could I weep over you, as our LORD wept over *Jeruſalem!* For, alas! how diſtant muſt you be from GOD? What a prodigious work have you to finiſh, who, inſtead of praying day and night, ſeldom or never pray at all? And, inſtead of being born again of GOD, ſo as not to commit ſin, are ſo deeply ſunk into the nature of devils, as to make a mock at it? Or, inſtead of overcoming the world, ſo as not to follow or be led by it, are continually making proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the luſts thereof. And, inſtead of being endued with the god-like diſpoſition of loving all men, even your enemies, have your hearts full of hatred, malice, and revenge, and deride thoſe who are the ſincere followers of the lowly JESUS. But think you, O ſinners, that

that God will admit ſuch polluted wretches into his ſight? Or ſhould he admit you, do you imagine you could take any pleaſure in him? No; heaven itſelf would be no heaven to you; the deviliſh diſpoſitions which are in your hearts, would render all the ſpiritual enjoyments of thoſe bleſſed manſions, ineffectual to make you happy. To qualify you to be bliſsful partakers of that heavenly inheritance with the ſaints in light, there is a meetneſs required: to attain which, ought to be the chief buſineſs of your lives.

It is true, you, as well as the righteous, in one ſenſe, ſhall ſee God; (for we muſt all appear before the judgment-ſeat of Christ) but you muſt ſee him once, never to ſee him more. For as you carry about in you the devil's image, with devils you muſt dwell: being of the ſame nature, you muſt ſhare the ſame doom. "Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your ſins may be blotted out." See that you receive the Holy Ghoſt, before you go hence: for otherwiſe, how can you eſcape the damnation of hell?

Secondly, Let me apply myſelf to thoſe who deceive themſelves with falſe hopes of ſalvation. Some, through the influence of a good education, or other providential reſtraints, have not run into the ſame exceſs of riot with other men, and they think they have no need to receive the Holy Ghoſt, but flatter themſelves that they are really born again.

But do you ſhew it by bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit? Do you pray without ceaſing? Do you not commit ſin? Have you overcome the world? And do you love your enemies, and all mankind, in the ſame manner, as Jesus Christ loved them?

If theſe things, brethren, be in you and abound, then may you have confidence towards God; but if not, although you may be civilized, yet you are not converted: no, you are yet in your ſins. The nature of the old *Adam* ſtill reigneth in your ſouls; and unleſs the nature of the ſecond *Adam* be grafted in its room, you can never ſee God.

Think not, therefore, to dreſs yourſelves up in the ornaments of a good nature, and civil education, and ſay with *Agag*, "ſurely the bitterneſs of death is paſt:" For God's juſtice, notwithſtanding that, like *Samuel*, ſhall hew you to pieces. However you may be highly eſteemed in the ſight of men, yet,

in

in the ſight of GOD, you are but like the apples of *Sodom*, dunghills covered over with ſnow, mere whited ſepulchres, appearing a little beautiful without, but inwardly full of corruption and of all uncleanneſs: and conſequently will be diſmiſſed at the laſt day with a "Verily, I know you not."

But the word of GOD is profitable for comfort as well as correction.

Thirdly, Therefore I addreſs myſelf to thoſe who are under the drawings of the Father, and are exerciſed with the Spirit of bondage, and not finding the marks before mentioned, are crying out, Who ſhall deliver us from the body of this death?

But fear not, little flock; for notwithſtanding your preſent infant ſtate of grace, it ſhall be your Father's good pleaſure to give you the kingdom. The grace of GOD, through JESUS CHRIST, ſhall deliver you, and give you what you thirſt after: He hath promiſed, he will alſo do it. Ye ſhall receive the ſpirit of adoption, that promiſe of the Father, if you faint not: only perſevere in ſeeking it; and determine not to be at reſt in your ſoul, till you know and feel that you are thus born again from above, and GOD's Spirit witneſſeth with your ſpirits that you are the children of GOD.

Fourthly and *Laſtly*, I addreſs myſelf to thoſe who have received the Holy Ghoſt in all his ſanctifying graces, and are almoſt ripe for glory.

Hail, happy ſaints! for your heaven is begun on earth: you have already received the firſt fruits of the Spirit, and are patiently waiting till that bleſſed change come, when your harveſt ſhall be compleat. I ſee and admire you, though, alas! at ſo great a diſtance from you: your life, I know, is hid with CHRIST in GOD. You have comforts, you have meat to eat, which a ſinful, carnal, ridiculing world knows nothing of. CHRIST's yoke is now become eaſy to you, and his burden light. You have paſſed through the pangs of the new birth, and now rejoice that CHRIST JESUS is ſpiritually formed in your hearts. You know what it is to dwell in CHRIST, and CHRIST in you. Like *Jacob*'s ladder, although your bodies are on earth, yet your ſouls and hearts are in heaven: and by your faith and conſtant recollection, like the bleſſed angels, you do always behold the face of your Father which is in heaven.

I need

I need not exhort you to preſs forward, for you know that in walking in the Spirit there is a great reward. Rather will I exhort you, in patience to poſſeſs your ſouls yet a little while, and JESUS CHRIST will deliver you from the burden of the fleſh, and an abundant entrance ſhall be adminiſtered to you, into the eternal joy and uninterrupted felicity of his heavenly kingdom.

Which GOD of his infinite mercy grant, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD: To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, three Perſons and one GOD, be aſcribed all honour, power, and glory, for ever and ever.

SERMON

SERMON XLIII.

The Almoſt Chriſtian.

ACTS xxvi. 28.

Almoſt thou perſuadeſt me to be a Chriſtian.

THESE words contain the ingenuous confeſſion of king *Agrippa*; which having ſome reference to, it may not be improper to relate the ſubſtance of the preceding verſes, with which the words are ſo cloſely connected.

The chapter, out of which the text is taken, contains an admirable account which the great St. *Paul* gave of his wonderful converſion from Judaiſm to Chriſtianity, when he was called to make his defence before *Feſtus* a *Gentile* governor, and king *Agrippa*. Our bleſſed LORD had long ſince foretold, that when the Son of man ſhould be lifted up, "his diſciples ſhould be brought before kings and rulers, for his name's ſake, for a teſtimony unto them." And very good was the deſign of infinite wiſdom in thus ordaining it; for Chriſtianity being, from the beginning, a doctrine of the Croſs, the princes and rulers of the earth thought themſelves too high to be inſtructed by ſuch mean teachers, or too happy to be diſturbed by ſuch unwelcome truths; and therefore would have always continued ſtrangers to JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified, had not the apoſtles, by being arraigned before them, gained opportunities of preaching to them "JESUS and the reſurrection." St. *Paul* knew full well that this was the main reaſon, why his bleſſed Maſter permitted his enemies at this time to arraign him at a public bar; and therefore, in compliance with the divine will, thinks it not

ſufficient,

ſufficient, barely to make his defence, but endeavours at the ſame time to convert his judges. And this he did with ſuch demonſtration of the ſpirit, and of power, that *Feſtus*, unwilling to be convinced by the ſtrongeſt evidence, cries out with a loud voice, "*Paul*, much learning doth make thee mad." To which the brave apoſtle (like a true follower of the holy JESUS) meekly replies, I am not mad, moſt noble *Feſtus*, but ſpeak forth the words of truth and ſoberneſs." But in all probability, ſeeing king *Agrippa* more affected with his diſcourſe, and obſerving in him an inclination to know the truth, he applies himſelf more particularly to him. "The king knoweth of theſe things; before whom alſo I ſpeak freely; for I am perſuaded that none of theſe things are hidden from him." And then, that if poſſible he might complete his wiſhed-for converſion, he with an inimitable ſtrain of oratory, addreſſes himſelf ſtill more cloſely, "King *Agrippa*, believeſt thou the prophets? I know that thou believeſt them." At which the paſſions of the king began to work ſo ſtrongly, that he was obliged in open court, to own himſelf affected by the priſoner's preaching, and ingenuouſly to cry out, "*Paul*, almoſt thou perſuadeſt me to be a Chriſtian."

Which words, taken with the context, afford us a lively repreſentation of the different reception, which the doctrine of CHRIST's miniſters, who come in the power and ſpirit of St. *Paul*, meets with now-a-days in the minds of men. For notwithſtanding they, like this great apoſtle, "ſpeak forth the words of truth and ſoberneſs;" and with ſuch energy and power, that all their adverſaries cannot juſtly gainſay or reſiſt; yet, too many, with the noble *Feſtus* before-mentioned, being like him, either too proud to be taught, or too ſenſual, too careleſs, or too worldly-minded to live up to the doctrine, in order to excuſe themſelves, cry out, that "much learning, much ſtudy, or, what is more unaccountable, much piety, hath made them mad." And though, bleſſed be GOD! all do not thus diſbelieve our report; yet amongſt thoſe who gladly receive the word, and confeſs that we ſpeak the words of truth and ſoberneſs, there are ſo few, who arrive at any higher degree of piety than that of *Agrippa*, or are any farther perſuaded than to be almoſt Chriſtians, that I cannot but think

think it highly neceſſary to warn my dear hearers of the danger of ſuch a ſtate. And therefore, from the words of the text, ſhall endeavour to ſhew theſe three things:

Firſt, What is meant by an almoſt chriſtian.

Secondly, What are the chief reaſons, why ſo many are no more than almoſt chriſtians.

Thirdly, I ſhall conſider the ineffectualneſs, danger, abſurdity, and uneaſineſs which attends thoſe who are but almoſt chriſtians; and then conclude with a general exhortation, to ſet all upon ſtriving not only to be almoſt, but altogether chriſtians.

I. And, *Firſt*, I am to conſider what is meant by an almoſt chriſtian.

An almoſt chriſtian, if we conſider him in reſpect to his duty to GOD, is one that halts between two opinions; that wavers between CHRIST and the world; that would reconcile GOD and *Mammon*, light and darkneſs, CHRIST and *Belial*. It is true, he has an inclination to religion, but then he is very cautious how he goes too far in it: his falſe heart is always crying out, Spare thyſelf, do thyſelf no harm. He prays indeed, that "GOD's will may be done on earth, as it is in heaven." But notwithſtanding, he is very partial in his obedience, and fondly hopes that GOD will not be extreme to mark every thing that he wilfully does amiſs; though an inſpired apoſtle has told him, that "he who offends in one point is guilty of all." But chiefly, he is one that depends much on outward ordinances, and on that account looks upon himſelf as righteous, and deſpiſes others; though at the ſame time he is as great a ſtranger to the divine life as any other perſon whatſoever. In ſhort, he is fond of the form, but never experiences the power of godlineſs in his heart. He goes on year after year, attending on the means of grace, but then, like *Pharaoh*'s lean kine, he is never the better, but rather the worſe for them.

If you conſider him in reſpect to his neighbour, he is one that is ſtrictly juſt to all; but then this does not proceed from any love to GOD or regard to man, but only through a principle of ſelf-love: becauſe he knows diſhoneſty will ſpoil his reputation, and conſequently hinder his thriving in the world.

He is one that depends much upon being negatively good, and contents himſelf with the conſciouſneſs of having done no one any harm; though he reads in the goſpel, that "the unprofitable ſervant was caſt into outer darkneſs," and the barren fig-tree was curſed and dried up from the roots, not for bearing bad, but no fruit.

He is no enemy to charitable contributions in public, if not too frequently recommended: but then he is unacquainted with the kind offices of viſiting the ſick and impriſoned, cloathing the naked, and relieving the hungary in a private manner. He thinks that theſe things belong only to the clergy, though his own falſe heart tells him, that nothing but pride keeps him from exerciſing theſe acts of humility; and that JESUS CHRIST, in the 25th chapter of St. *Matthew*, condemns perſons to everlaſting puniſhment, not merely for being fornicators, drunkards, or extortioners, but for neglecting theſe charitable offices, "When the Son of man ſhall come in his glory, he ſhall ſet the ſheep on his right-hand, and the goats on his left. And then ſhall he ſay unto them on his left-hand, depart from me, ye curſed, into everlaſting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirſty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a ſtranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye cloathed me not; ſick and in priſon, and ye viſited me not. Then ſhall they alſo ſay, LORD, when ſaw we thee an hungred, or a-thirſt, or a ſtranger, or naked, or ſick, or in priſon, and did not miniſter unto thee? Then ſhall he anſwer them, Verily I ſay unto you, inaſmuch as ye have not done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye did it not unto me: and theſe ſhall go away into everlaſting puniſhment." I thought proper to give you this whole paſſage of ſcripture at large, becauſe our Saviour lays ſuch a particular

ſtreſs upon it; and yet it is ſo little regarded, that were we to judge by the practice of chriſtians, one ſhould be tempted to think there were no ſuch verſes in the Bible.

But to proceed in the character of an *almoſt chriſtian:* If we conſider him in reſpect of himſelf; as we ſaid he was ſtrictly honeſt to his neighbour, ſo he is likewiſe ſtrictly ſober in himſelf: but then both his honeſty and ſobriety proceed from the ſame principle of a falſe ſelf-love. It is true, he runs not into the ſame exceſs of riot with other men; but then it is not out of obedience to the laws of GOD, but either becauſe his conſtitution will not away with intemperance; or rather becauſe he is cautious of forfeiting his reputation, or unfitting himſelf for temporal buſineſs. But though he is ſo prudent as to avoid intemperance and exceſs, for the reaſons before-mentioned; yet he always goes to the extremity of what is lawful. It is true, he is no drunkard; but then he has no *chriſtian ſelf-denial.* He cannot think our Saviour to be ſo auſtere a Maſter, as to deny us to indulge ourſelves in ſome particulars: and ſo by this means he is deſtitute of a ſenſe of true religion, as much as if he lived in debauchery, or any other crime whatever. As to ſettling his principles as well as practice, he is guided more by the world, than by the word of GOD: for his part, he cannot think the way to heaven ſo narrow as ſome would make it; and therefore conſiders not ſo much what ſcripture requires, as what ſuch and ſuch a good man does, or what will beſt ſuit his own corrupt inclinations. Upon this account, he is not only very cautious himſelf, but likewiſe very careful of young converts, whoſe faces are ſet heavenward; and therefore is always acting the devil's part, and bidding them ſpare themſelves, though they are doing no more than what the ſcripture ſtrictly requires them to do: The conſequence of which is, that "he ſuffers not himſelf to enter into the kingdom of GOD, and thoſe that are entering in he hinders."

Thus lives the almoſt chriſtian: not that I can ſay, I have fully deſcribed him to you; but from theſe outlines and ſketches of his character, if your conſciences have done their proper office, and made a particular application of what has been

been ſaid to your own hearts, I cannot but fear that ſome of you may obſerve ſome features in his picture, odious as it is, too near reſembling your own; and therefore I cannot but hope, that you will join with the apoſtle in the words immediately following the text, and wiſh yourſelves "to be not only almoſt, but altogether chriſtians."

II. I proceed to the ſecond general thing propoſed; to conſider the reaſons why ſo many are no more than almoſt chriſtians.

1. And the firſt reaſon I ſhall mention is, becauſe ſo many ſet out with falſe notions of religion; though they live in a chriſtian country, yet they know not what chriſtianity is. This perhaps may be eſteemed a hard ſaying, but experience ſadly evinces the truth of it; for ſome place religion in being of this or that communion; more in morality; moſt in a round of duties, and a model of performances; and few, very few acknowledge it to be, what it really is, a thorough inward change of nature, a divine life, a vital participation of JESUS CHRIST, an union of the ſoul with GOD; which the apoſtle expreſſes by ſaying, "He that is joined to the LORD is one ſpirit." Hence it happens, that ſo many, even of the moſt knowing profeſſors, when you come to converſe with them concerning the eſſence, the life, the ſoul of religion, I mean our new birth in JESUS CHRIST, confeſs themſelves quite ignorant of the matter, and cry out with *Nicodemus*, "How can this thing be?" And no wonder then, that ſo many are only almoſt chriſtians, when ſo many know not what chriſtianity is: no marvel, that ſo many take up with the form, when they are quite ſtrangers to the power of godlineſs; or content themſelves with the ſhadow, when they know ſo little about the ſubſtance of it. And this is one cauſe why ſo many are almoſt, and ſo few are altogether chriſtians.

2. A ſecond reaſon that may be aſſigned why ſo many are no more than almoſt chriſtians, is a ſervile fear of man: multitudes there are and have been, who, though awakened to a ſenſe of the divine life, and have taſted and felt the powers of the world to come; yet out of a baſe ſinful fear of being

counted ſingular, or contemned by men, have ſuffered all thoſe good impreſſions to wear off. It is true, they have ſome eſteem for JESUS CHRIST; but then, like *Nicodemus*, they would come to him only by night: they are willing to ſerve him; but then they would do it ſecretly, for fear of the *Jews*: they have a mind to ſee JESUS, but then they cannot come to him becauſe of the preſs, and for fear of being laughed at, and ridiculed by thoſe with whom they uſed to ſit at meat. But well did our Saviour propheſy of ſuch perſons, "How can ye love me, who receive honour one of another?" Alas! have they never read, that "the friendſhip of this world is enmity with GOD;" and that our LORD himſelf has threatened, "Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me or of my words, in this wicked and adulterous generation, of him ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father and of his holy angels?" No wonder that ſo many are no more than almoſt chriſtians, ſince ſo many "love the praiſe of men more than the honour which cometh of GOD."

3. A third reaſon why ſo many are no more than almoſt chriſtians, is a reigning love of money. This was the pitiable caſe of that forward young man in the goſpel, who came running to our bleſſed LORD, and kneeling before him, enquired "what he muſt do to inherit eternal life;" to whom our bleſſed Maſter replied, "Thou knoweſt the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not ſteal:" To which the young man replied, "All theſe have I kept from my youth." But when our LORD proceeded to tell him, "Yet lackeſt thou one thing; Go ſell all that thou haſt, and give to the poor; he was grieved at that ſaying, and went away ſorrowful, for he had great poſſeſſions!" Poor youth! he had a good mind to be a chriſtian, and to inherit eternal life, but thought it too dear, if it could be purchaſed at no leſs an expence than of his eſtate! And thus many, both young and old, now-a-days, come running to worſhip our bleſſed LORD in public, and kneel before him in private, and enquire at his goſpel, what they muſt do to inherit eternal life: but when they find they muſt renounce the ſelf-enjoyment of riches, and forſake all in affection to follow him, they

cry,

cry, "The LORD pardon us in this thing! We pray thee, have us excuſed."

But is heaven ſo ſmall a trifle in men's eſteem, as not to be worth a little gilded earth? Is eternal life ſo mean a purchaſe, as not to deſerve the temporary renunciation of a few tranſitory riches? Surely it is. But however inconſiſtent ſuch a behaviour may be, this inordinate love of money is too evidently the common and fatal cauſe, why ſo many are no more than almoſt chriſtians.

4. Nor is the love of pleaſure a leſs uncommon, or a leſs fatal cauſe why ſo many are no more than almoſt chriſtians. Thouſands and ten thouſands there are, who deſpiſe riches, and would willingly be true diſciples of JESUS CHRIST, if parting with their money would make them ſo; but when they are told that our bleſſed LORD has ſaid, "Whoſoever will come after him muſt deny himſelf;" like the pitiable young man before-mentioned, "they go away ſorrowful:" for they have too great a love for ſenſual pleaſures. They will perhaps ſend for the miniſters of CHRIST, as *Herod* did for *John*, and hear them gladly: but touch them in their *Herodias*, tell them they muſt part with ſuch or ſuch a darling pleaſure; and with wicked *Ahab* they cry out, "Haſt thou found us, O our enemy?" Tell them of the neceſſity of mortification and ſelf-denial, and it is as difficult for them to hear, as if you was to bid them "cut off a right-hand, or pluck out a right-eye." They cannot think our bleſſed LORD requires ſo much at their hands, though an inſpired apoſtle has commanded us to "mortify our members which are upon earth." And who himſelf, even after he had converted thouſands, and was very near arrived to the end of his race, yet profeſſed that it was his daily practice to "keep under his body, and bring it into ſubjection, leſt after he had preached to others, he himſelf ſhould be a caſt-away!"

But ſome men would be wiſer than this great apoſtle, and chalk out to us what they falſely imagine an eaſier way to happineſs. They would flatter us, we may go to heaven without offering violence to our ſenſual appetites; and enter

into the ſtrait gate without ſtriving againſt our carnal inclinations. And this is another reaſon why ſo many are only almoſt, and not altogether chriſtians.

5. The fifth and laſt reaſon I ſhall aſſign why ſo many are only almoſt chriſtians, is a fickleneſs and inſtability of temper.

It has been, no doubt, a misfortune that many a miniſter and ſincere chriſtian has met with, to weep and wail over numbers of promiſing converts, who ſeemingly began in the Spirit, but after a while fell away, and baſely ended in the fleſh; and this not for want of right notions in religion, nor out of a ſervile fear of man, nor from the love of money, or of ſenſual pleaſure, but through an inſtability and fickleneſs of temper. They looked upon religion merely for novelty, as ſomething which pleaſed them for a while; but after their curioſity was ſatisfied, they laid it aſide again: like the young man that came to ſee JESUS with a linen cloth about his naked body, they have followed him for a ſeaſon, but when temptations came to take hold on them, for want of a little more reſolution, they have been ſtripped of all their good intentions, and fled away naked. They at firſt, like a tree planted by the water-ſide, grew up and flouriſhed for a while; but having no root in themſelves, no inward principle of holineſs and piety, like *Jonah*'s gourd, they were ſoon dried up and withered. Their good intentions are too like the violent motions of the animal ſpirits of a body newly beheaded, which, though impetuous, are not laſting. In ſhort, they ſet out well in their journey to heaven, but finding the way either narrower or longer than they expected, through an unſteadineſs of temper, they have made an eternal halt, and ſo "returned like the dog to his vomit, or like the ſow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the mire!"

But I tremble to pronounce the fate of ſuch unſtable profeſſors, who having put their hands to the plough, for want of a little more reſolution, ſhamefully look back. How ſhall I repeat to them that dreadful threatening, "If any man draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him:" And again,

"It is impoſſible (that is, exceeding difficult at leaſt) for thoſe that have been once enlightened, and have taſted of the heavenly gift, and the powers of the world to come, if they ſhould fall away, to be renewed again unto repentance." But notwithſtanding the goſpel is ſo ſevere againſt apoſtates, yet many that begun well, through a fickleneſs of temper, (O that none of us here preſent may ever be ſuch) have been by this means of the number of thoſe that turn back unto perdition. And this is the fifth, and the laſt reaſon I ſhall give, why ſo many are only almoſt, and not altogether chriſtians.

III. Proceed we now to the third general thing propoſed, namely, to conſider the folly of being no more than an almoſt chriſtian.

1. And the *firſt* proof I ſhall give of the folly of ſuch a proceeding is, that it is ineffectual to ſalvation. It is true, ſuch men are almoſt good; but almoſt to hit the mark, is really to miſs it. GOD requires us "to love him with all our hearts, with all our ſouls, and with all our ſtrength." He loves us too well to admit any rival; becauſe, ſo far as our hearts are empty of GOD, ſo far muſt they be unhappy. The devil, indeed, like the falſe mother that came before *Solomon*, would have our hearts divided, as ſhe would have had the child; but GOD, like the true mother, will have all or none. "My Son, give me thy heart," thy whole heart, is the general call to all; and if this be not done, we never can expect the divine mercy.

Perſons may play the hypocrite; but GOD at the great day will ſtrike them dead, (as he did *Ananias* and *Sapphira* by the mouth of his ſervant *Peter*) for pretending to offer him all their hearts, when they keep back from him the greateſt part. They may perhaps impoſe upon their fellow-creatures for a while; but he that enabled *Elijah* to cry out, "Come in thou wife of *Jeroboam*," when ſhe came diſguiſed to enquire about her ſick ſon, will alſo diſcover them through their moſt artful diſſimulations; and if their hearts are not wholly with him, appoint them their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers.

2. But, *ſecondly*, What renders an half-way-piety more inexcuſable is, that it is not only inſufficient to our own ſalvation, but alſo very prejudicial to that of others.

An almoſt chriſtian is one of the moſt hurtful creatures in the world: he is a wolf in ſheep's cloathing: he is one of thoſe falſe prophets, our bleſſed LORD bids us beware of in his ſermon on the mount, who would perſuade men, that the way to heaven is broader than it really is; and thereby, as it was obſerved before, "enter not into the kingdom of GOD themſelves, and thoſe that are entering in they hinder." Theſe, theſe are the men that turn the world into a lukewarm *Laodicean* ſpirit; that hang out falſe lights, and ſo ſhipwreck unthinking benighted ſouls in their voyage to the haven of eternity. Theſe are they who are greater enemies to the croſs of CHRIST, than infidels themſelves: for of an unbeliever every one will be aware; but an almoſt chriſtian, through his ſubtle hypocriſy, draws away many after him; and therefore muſt expect to receive the greater damnation.

3. But, *thirdly*, As it is moſt prejudicial to ourſelves and hurtful to others, ſo it is the greateſt inſtance of ingratitude we can expreſs towards our LORD and Maſter JESUS CHRIST. For did he come down from heaven, and ſhed his precious blood, to purchaſe theſe hearts of ours, and ſhall we only give him half of them? O how can we ſay we love him, when our hearts are not wholly with him? How can we call him our Saviour, when we will not endeavour ſincerely to approve ourſelves to him, and ſo let him ſee the travail of his ſoul, and be ſatisfied!

Had any of us purchaſed a ſlave at a moſt expenſive rate, and who was before involved in the utmoſt miſeries and torments, and ſo muſt have continued for ever, had we ſhut up our bowels of compaſſion from him; and was this ſlave afterwards to grow rebellious, or deny giving us but half his ſervice; how, how ſhould we exclaim againſt his baſe ingratitude! And yet this baſe ungrateful ſlave thou art, O man, who acknowledgeſt thyſelf to be redeemed from infinite unavoidable miſery and puniſhment by the death of JESUS CHRIST, and

yet

yet wilt not give thyſelf wholly to him. But ſhall we deal with GOD our Maker in a manner we would not be dealt with by a man like ourſelves? GOD forbid! No. Suffer me, therefore,

To add a word or two of exhortation to you, to excite you to be not only almoſt, but altogether chriſtians. O let us ſcorn all baſe and treacherous treatment of our King and Saviour, of our GOD and Creator. Let us not take ſome pains all our lives to go to heaven, and yet plunge ourſelves into hell at laſt. Let us give to GOD our whole hearts, and no longer halt between two opinions: if the world be GOD, let us ſerve that; if pleaſure be a GOD, let us ſerve that; but if the LORD he be GOD, let us, O let us ſerve him alone. Alas! why, why ſhould we ſtand out any longer? Why ſhould we be ſo in love with ſlavery, as not wholly to renounce the world, the fleſh, and the devil, which, like ſo many ſpiritual chains, bind down our ſouls, and hinder them from flying up to GOD. Alas! what are we afraid of? Is not GOD able to reward our entire obedience? If he is, as the almoſt chriſtian's lame way of ſerving him, ſeems to grant, why then will we not ſerve him entirely? For the ſame reaſon we do ſo much, why do we not do more? Or do you think that being only half religious will make you happy, but that going farther, will render you miſerable and uneaſy? Alas! this, my brethren, is deluſion all over: for what is it but this *half piety*, this wavering between GOD and the world, that makes ſo many, that are ſeemingly well diſpoſed, ſuch utter ſtrangers to the comforts of religion? They chuſe juſt ſo much of religion as will diſturb them in their luſts, and follow their luſts ſo far as to deprive themſelves of the comforts of religion. Whereas on the contrary, would they ſincerely leave all in affection, and give their hearts wholly to GOD, they would then (and they cannot till then) experience the unſpeakable pleaſure of having a mind at unity with itſelf, and enjoy ſuch a peace of GOD, which even in this life paſſes all underſtanding, and which they were entire ſtrangers to before. It is true, if we will devote ourſelves entirely to GOD, we muſt meet with contempt; but then it is becauſe contempt is neceſſary to heal our pride. We muſt

renounce ſome ſenſual pleaſures, but then it is becauſe thoſe unfit us for ſpiritual ones, which are infinitely better. We muſt renounce the love of the world; but then it is that we may be filled with the love of GOD: and when that has once enlarged our hearts, we ſhall, like *Jacob* when he ſerved for his beloved *Rachel*, think nothing too difficult to undergo, no hardſhips too tedious to endure, becauſe of the love we ſhall then have for our dear Redeemer. Thus eaſy, thus delightful will be the ways of GOD even in this life; but when once we throw off theſe bodies, and our ſouls are filled with all the fulneſs of GOD, O! what heart can conceive, what tongue can expreſs, with what unſpeakable joy and conſolation ſhall we then look back on our paſt ſincere and hearty ſervices. Think you then, my dear hearers, we ſhall repent we had done too much; or rather think you not, we ſhall be aſhamed that we did no more; and bluſh we were ſo backward to give up all to GOD; when he intended hereafter to give us himſelf?

Let me therefore, to conclude, exhort you, my brethren, to have always before you the unſpeakable happineſs of enjoying GOD. And think withal, that every degree of holineſs you neglect, every act of piety you omit, is a jewel taken out of your crown, a degree of bleſſedneſs loſt in the viſion of GOD. O! do but always think and act thus, and you will no longer be labouring to compound matters between GOD and the world; but, on the contrary, be daily endeavouring to give up yourſelves more and more unto him; you will be always watching, always praying, always aſpiring after farther degrees of purity and love, and conſequently always preparing yourſelves for a fuller ſight and enjoyment of that GOD, in whoſe preſence there is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right-hand there are pleaſures for ever more. Amen! Amen!

SERMON

SERMON XLIV.

CHRIST the Believer's Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption.

1 COR. i. 30.

But of him are ye in CHRIST JESUS, *who of* GOD *is made unto us, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption.*

OF all the verſes in the book of GOD, this which I have now read to you, is, I believe, one of the moſt comprehenſive: What glad tidings does it bring to believers! what precious privileges are they herein inveſted with! how are they here led to the fountain of them all, I mean, the love, the everlaſting love of GOD the Father! "Of him are ye in CHRIST JESUS, who of GOD is made unto us, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption."

Without referring you to the context, I ſhall from the words,

Firſt, Point out to you the fountain, from which all thoſe bleſſings flow, that the elect of GOD partake of in JESUS CHRIST, "who of GOD is made unto us." And,

Secondly, I ſhall conſider what theſe bleſſings are, "wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption."

Firſt, I would point out to you the fountain from which all thoſe bleſſings flow, that the elect of GOD partake of in JESUS, "who of GOD is made unto us," the Father, he it is who is ſpoken of here. Not as though JESUS CHRIST was not GOD alſo; but GOD the Father is the fountain of the Deity;

Deity; and, if we conſider JESUS CHRIST acting as Mediator, GOD the Father is greater than he; there was an eternal contract between the Father and the Son: "I have made a covenant with my choſen, and I have ſworn unto *David* my ſervant;" now *David* was a type of CHRIST, with whom the Father made a covenant, that if he would obey and ſuffer, and make himſelf a ſacrifice for ſin, he ſhould "ſee his ſeed, he ſhould prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the LORD ſhould proſper in his hands." This compact our LORD refers to, in that glorious prayer recorded in the 17th chapter of *John*; and therefore he prays for, or rather demands with a full aſſurance, all that were given to him by the Father: "Father, I will that they alſo whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am." For this ſame reaſon the apoſtle breaks out into praiſes of GOD, even the Father of our LORD JESUS CHRIST; for he loved the elect with an everlaſting love, or, as our LORD expreſſes it, "before the foundation of the world;" and therefore, to ſhew them to whom they were beholden for their ſalvation, our LORD, in the 25th of *Matthew*, repreſents himſelf, ſaying, "Come, ye bleſſed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And thus, in reply to the mother of *Zebedee's* children, he ſays, "It is not mine to give, but it ſhall be given to them, for whom it is prepared, of the Father." The apoſtle therefore, when here ſpeaking of the chriſtian's privileges, leſt they ſhould ſacrifice to their own drag, or think their ſalvation was owing to their own faithfulneſs, or improvement of their own free-will, reminds them to look back on the everlaſting love of GOD the Father; "who of GOD is made unto us, &c."

Would to GOD, this point of doctrine was conſidered more, and people were more ſtudious of the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son! we ſhould not then have ſo much diſputing againſt the doctrine of election, or hear it condemned (even by good men) as a doctrine of devils. For my own part, I cannot ſee how true humbleneſs of mind can be attained without a knowledge of it; and though I will not ſay, that every one who denies election is a bad man, yet I will ſay, with that ſweet ſinger, Mr. *Trail*, it is a very bad

ſign;

ſign: ſuch a one, whoever he be, I think cannot truly know himſelf: for, if we deny election, we muſt, partly at leaſt, glory in ourſelves; but our redemption is ſo ordered, that no fleſh ſhould glory in the divine preſence; and hence it is, that the pride of man oppoſes this doctrine, becauſe according to this doctrine, and no other, "he that glories, muſt glory only in the LORD." But what ſhall I ſay? Election is a myſtery that ſhines with ſuch reſplendent brightneſs, that, to make uſe of the words of one who has drank deeply of electing love, it dazzles the weak eyes even of ſome of GOD's dear children; however, though they know it not, all the bleſſings they receive, all the privileges they do or will enjoy, through JESUS CHRIST, flow from the everlaſting love of GOD the Father: "But of him are you in CHRIST JESUS, who of GOD is made unto us, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption."

Secondly, I come to ſhew what theſe bleſſings are, which are here, through CHRIST, made over to the elect. And

1. *Firſt*, CHRIST is made to them *wiſdom*; but wherein does true wiſdom conſiſt? Was I to aſk ſome of you, perhaps you would ſay, in indulging the luſt of the fleſh, and ſaying to your ſouls, eat, drink, and be merry; but this is only the wiſdom of brutes; they have as good a guſt and reliſh for ſenſual pleaſures, as the greateſt epicure on earth. Others would tell me, true wiſdom conſiſted in adding houſe to houſe, and field to field, and calling lands after their own names; but this cannot be true wiſdom; for riches often take to themſelves wings, and fly away, like an eagle towards heaven. Even wiſdom itſelf aſſures us, "that a man's life doth not conſiſt in the abundance of the things which he poſſeſſes;" vanity, vanity, all theſe things are vanity; for, if riches leave not the owner, the owners muſt ſoon leave them; "for rich men muſt alſo die, and leave their riches for others;" their riches cannot procure them redemption from the grave, whither we are all haſtening apace.

But perhaps you deſpiſe riches and pleaſure, and therefore place wiſdom in the knowledge of books: but it is poſſible for you

you to tell the numbers of the ſtars, and call them all by their names, and yet be mere fools; learned men are not always wiſe; nay, our common learning, ſo much cried up, makes men only ſo many accompliſhed fools; to keep you therefore no longer in ſuſpenſe, and withal to humble you, I will ſend you to an heathen to ſchool, to learn what true wiſdom is: "Know thyſelf," was a ſaying of one of the wiſe men of *Greece*; this is certainly true wiſdom, and this is that wiſdom ſpoken of in the text, and which JESUS CHRIST is made to all elect ſinners; they are made to know themſelves, ſo as not to think more highly of themſelves than they ought to think. Before they were darkneſs, now they are light in the LORD; and in that light they ſee their own darkneſs; they now bewail themſelves as fallen creatures by nature, dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, ſons and heirs of hell, and children of wrath; they now ſee that all their righteouſneſſes are but as filthy rags; that there is no health in their ſouls; that they are poor and miſerable, blind and naked; and that there is no name given under heaven, whereby they can be ſaved, but that of JESUS CHRIST. They ſee the neceſſity of cloſing with a Saviour; and behold the wiſdom of GOD in appointing him to be a Saviour; they are alſo made willing to accept of ſalvation upon our LORD's own terms, and to receive him as their all in all: thus CHRIST is made to them wiſdom.

2. *Secondly*, *Righteouſneſs*. "Who of GOD is made unto us, wiſdom, righteouſneſs;" CHRIST's whole perſonal righteouſneſs is made over to, and accounted theirs. Being enabled to lay hold on CHRIST by faith, GOD the Father blots out their tranſgreſſions, as with a thick cloud; their ſins, and their iniquities he remembers no more; they are made the righteouſneſs of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, "who is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth." In one ſenſe, GOD now ſees no ſin in them; the whole covenant of works is fulfilled in them; they are actually juſtified, acquitted, and looked upon as righteous in the ſight of GOD; they are perfectly accepted in the beloved; they are compleat in him; the flaming ſword of GOD's wrath, which before moved every way, is now removed, and free acceſs given to the tree of life; they are enabled to reach out the arm of faith, and pluck, and live

live for evermore. Hence it is that the apoſtle, under a ſenſe of this bleſſed privilege, breaks out into this triumphant language; "It is CHRIST that juſtifies, who is he that condemns?" Does ſin condemn? CHRIST's righteouſneſs delivers believers from the guilt of it: CHRIST is their Saviour, and is become a propitiation for their ſins: who therefore ſhall lay any thing to the charge of GOD's elect? Does the law condemn? By having CHRIST's righteouſneſs imputed to them, they are dead to the law, as a covenant of works; CHRIST has fulfilled it for them, and in their ſtead. Does death threaten them? they need not fear: the ſting of death is ſin, the ſtrength of ſin is the law; but GOD has given them the victory, by imputing to them the righteouſneſs of the LORD JESUS.

And what a privilege is here! Well might the angels at the birth of CHRIST, ſay to the humble ſhepherds, "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy;" unto you that believe in CHRIST, "a Saviour is born." And well may angels rejoice at the converſion of poor ſinners: for the LORD is their righteouſneſs; they have peace with GOD, through faith in CHRIST's blood, and ſhall never enter into condemnation. O believers! (for this diſcourſe is intended in a ſpecial manner for you) lift up your heads; "Rejoice in the LORD always; again I ſay, rejoice." CHRIST is made to you of GOD righteouſneſs, what then ſhould you fear? you are made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him; you may be called, "The LORD our righteouſneſs." Of what then ſhould you be afraid? what ſhall ſeparate you henceforward from the love of CHRIST? "ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword? No, I am perſuaded, neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate you from the love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS our LORD," who of GOD is made unto you righteouſneſs.

This is a glorious privilege, but this is only the beginning of the happineſs of believers: For

3. *Thirdly*, CHRIST is not only made to them righteouſneſs, but *ſanctification*; by ſanctification, I do not mean a bare hypocritical

critical attendance on outward ordinances, though rightly-informed chriſtians will think it their duty and privilege conſtantly to attend on all outward ordinances. Nor do I mean by ſanctification, a bare outward reformation, and a few tranſient convictions, or a little legal ſorrow; for all this an unſanctified man may have; but, by ſanctification, I mean a total renovation of the whole man; by the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, believers become legally, by ſanctification they are made ſpiritually, alive; by one they are entitled to, by the other they are made meet for, glory. They are ſanctified, therefore, throughout, in ſpirit, ſoul and body.

Their underſtandings, which were before dark, now become light in the LORD; and their wills, before contrary to, now become one with, the will of GOD: their affections are now ſet on things above; their memory is now filled with divine things; their natural conſciences are now enlightened; their members, which were before inſtruments of uncleanneſs, and of iniquity unto iniquity, are now inſtruments of righteouſneſs and true holineſs; in ſhort, they are new creatures; "old things are paſſed away, all things are become new," in their hearts; ſin has now no longer dominion over them; they are freed from the power, though not the indwelling and being, of it; they are holy both in heart and life, in all manner of converſation; they are made partakers of a divine nature; and from JESUS CHRIST, they receive grace for grace; and every grace that is in CHRIST, is copied and tranſcribed into their ſouls; they are transformed into his likeneſs; he is formed within them; they dwell in him, and he in them; they are led by the Spirit, and bring forth the fruits thereof; they know that CHRIST is their *Emmanuel*, GOD with and in them; they are living temples of the Holy Ghoſt. And therefore, being a holy habitation unto the LORD, the whole trinity dwells and walks in them; even here, they ſit together with CHRIST in heavenly places, and are vitally united to him, their head, by a living faith; their Redeemer, their Maker, is their huſband; they are fleſh of his fleſh, bone of his bone; they talk, they walk with him, as a man talketh and walketh with his friend; in ſhort, they are one with CHRIST, even as JESUS CHRIST and the Father are one.

Thus

Thus is CHRIST made to believers ſanctification. And O what a privilege is this! to be changed from beaſts into ſaints, and from a deviliſh, to be made partakers of a divine nature; to be tranſlated from the kingdom of Satan, into the kingdom of GOD's dear Son! to put off the old man, which is corrupt, and to put on the new man, which is created after GOD, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs. O what an unſpeakable bleſſing is this! I almoſt ſtand amazed at the contemplation thereof. Well might the apoſtle exhort believers to rejoice in the LORD; indeed they have reaſon always to rejoice, yea, to rejoice on a dying bed; for the kingdom of GOD is in them; they are changed from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the LORD: well may this be a myſtery to the natural, for it is a myſtery even to the ſpiritual man himſelf, a myſtery which he cannot fathom. Does it not often dazzle your eyes, O ye children of GOD, to look at your own brightneſs, when the candle of the LORD ſhines out, and your Redeemer lifts up the light of his bleſſed countenance upon your ſouls? Are not you aſtoniſhed, when you feel the love of GOD ſhed abroad in your hearts, by the Holy Ghoſt, and GOD holds out the golden ſceptre of his mercy, and bids you aſk what you will, and it ſhall be given you? Does not that peace of GOD, which keeps and rules your hearts, ſurpaſs the utmoſt limits of your underſtandings? and is not the joy you feel unſpeakable? is it not full of glory? I am perſuaded it is; and in your ſecret communion, when the LORD's love flows in upon your ſouls, you are as it were ſwallowed up in, or, to uſe the apoſtle's phraſe, "filled with all the fulneſs of GOD." Are not you ready to cry out with *Solomon*, "And will the LORD, indeed, dwell thus with men!" How is it that we ſhould be thus thy ſons and daughters, O LORD GOD Almighty!

If you are children of GOD, and know what it is to have fellowſhip with the Father and the Son; if you walk by faith, and not by ſight; I am aſſured this is frequently the language of your hearts.

But look forward, and ſee an unbounded proſpect of eternal happineſs lying before thee, O believer! what thou haſt already received, are only the firſt-fruits, like the cluſter of grapes

brought out of the land of *Canaan*; only an earneſt and pledge of yet infinitely better things to come: the harveſt is to follow; thy grace is hereafter to be ſwallowed up in glory. Thy great *Joſhua*, and merciful high Prieſt, ſhall adminiſter an abundant entrance to thee into the land of promiſe, that reſt which awaits the children of GOD: For CHRIST is not only made to believers, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, but alſo *redemption*.

But, before we enter upon the explanation and contemplation of this privilege,

Firſt, Learn hence the great miſtake of thoſe writers, and clergy, who, notwithſtanding they talk of ſanctification and inward holineſs (as indeed ſometimes they do, though in a very looſe and ſuperficial manner) yet they generally make it the *cauſe*, whereas they ſhould conſider it as the *effect*, of our juſtification. "Of him are ye in CHRIST JESUS, who of GOD is made unto us, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, (and then) ſanctification." For CHRIST's righteouſneſs, or that which CHRIST has done in our ſtead without us, is the ſole cauſe of our acceptance in the ſight of GOD, and of all holineſs wrought in us: to this, and not to the light within, or any thing wrought within, ſhould poor ſinners ſeek for juſtification in the ſight of GOD: for the ſake of CHRIST's righteouſneſs alone, and not any thing wrought in us, does GOD look favourably upon us; our ſanctification at beſt, in this life, is not compleat: though we are delivered from the power, we are not freed from the in-being of ſin; but not only the dominion, but the in-being of ſin, is forbidden by the perfect law of GOD: for it is not ſaid, thou ſhalt not give way to luſt, but, "thou ſhalt not luſt." So that whilſt the principle of luſt remains in the leaſt degree in our hearts, though we are otherwiſe never ſo holy, yet we cannot, on account of that, hope for acceptance with GOD. We muſt firſt, therefore, look for a righteouſneſs without us, even the righteouſneſs of our LORD JESUS CHRIST: for this reaſon the apoſtle mentions it, and puts it before ſanctification in the words of the text. And whoſoever teacheth any other doctrine, doth not preach the truth as it is in JESUS.

Secondly,

Secondly, From hence alſo, the Antinomians and formal hypocrites may be confuted, who talk of CHRIST without, but know nothing, experimentally, of a work of ſanctification wrought within them. Whatever they may pretend to, ſince CHRIST is not in them, the LORD is not their righteouſneſs, and they have no well-grounded hope of glory: for though ſanctification is not the cauſe, yet it is the effect of our acceptance with GOD; "Who of GOD is made unto us righteouſneſs and ſanctification." He therefore, that is really in CHRIST, is a new creature; it is not going back to a covenant of works, to look into our hearts, and, ſeeing that they are changed and renewed, from thence form a comfortable and well-grounded aſſurance of the ſafety of our ſtates: no, but this is what we are directed to in ſcripture; by our bringing forth the fruits, we are to judge whether or no we ever did truly partake of the Spirit of GOD. "We know, (ſays *John*) that we are paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren." And however we may talk of CHRIST's righteouſneſs, and exclaim againſt legal preachers; yet, if we are not holy in heart and life, if we are not ſanctified and renewed by the Spirit in our minds, we are ſelf-deceivers, we are only formal hypocrites: for we muſt not put aſunder what GOD has joined together; we muſt keep the medium between the two extremes; not inſiſt ſo much on the one hand upon CHRIST without, as to exclude CHRIST within, as an evidence of our being his, and as a preparation for future happineſs; nor, on the other hand, ſo depend on inherent righteouſneſs or holineſs wrought in us, as to exclude the righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST without us. But

4. *Fourthly*, Let us now go on, and take a view of the other link, or rather the end, of the believer's golden chain of privileges, *redemption*. But we muſt look very high; for the top of it, like *Jacob*'s ladder, reaches heaven, where all believers will aſcend, and be placed at the right-hand of GOD. "Who of GOD is made unto us, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and *redemption*."

This is a golden chain indeed! and, what is beſt of all, not one link can ever be broken aſunder from another. Was there

no other text in the book of GOD, this ſingle one ſufficiently proves the final perſeverance of true believers: for never did GOD yet juſtify a man, whom he did not ſanctify; nor ſanctify one, whom he did not compleatly redeem and glorify; no; as for GOD, his way, his work, is perfect; he always carried on and finiſhed the work he begun; thus it was in the firſt, ſo it is in the new creation; when GOD ſays, "Let there be light," there is light, that ſhines more and more unto the perfect day, when believers enter into their eternal reſt, as GOD entered into his. Thoſe whom GOD has juſtified, he has in effect glorified: for as a man's worthineſs was not the cauſe of GOD's giving him CHRIST's righteouſneſs, ſo neither ſhall his unworthineſs be a cauſe of his taking it away; GOD's gifts and callings are without repentance; and I cannot think, they are clear in the notion of CHRIST's righteouſneſs, who deny the final perſeverance of the ſaints; I fear, they underſtand juſtification in that low ſenſe, which I underſtood it in a few years ago, as implying no more than remiſſion of ſins: but it not only ſignifies remiſſion of ſins paſt, but alſo a *fœderal right* to all good things to come. If GOD has given us his only Son, how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things? Therefore, the apoſtle, after he ſays, "Who of GOD is made unto us righteouſneſs," does not ſay, perhaps he may be made to us ſanctification and redemption; but, "he is made:" for there is an eternal, indiſſoluble connection between theſe bleſſed privileges. As the obedience of CHRIST is imputed to believers, ſo his perſeverance in that obedience is to be imputed to them alſo: and it argues great ignorance of the covenant of grace and redemption, to object againſt it.

By the word *redemption*, we are to underſtand, not only a compleat deliverance from all evil, but alſo a full enjoyment of all good both in body and ſoul: I ſay, both in body and ſoul; for the LORD is alſo for the body; the bodies of the ſaints in this life are temples of the Holy Ghoſt; GOD makes a covenant with the duſt of believers; after death, though worms deſtroy them, yet, even in their fleſh ſhall they ſee GOD. I fear, indeed, there are ſome *Sadducees* in our days, or at leaſt heretics, who ſay, either, that there is no reſurrection of the body, or that the reſurrection is paſt already, namely, in our regeneration:

regeneration: Hence it is, that our LORD's coming in the flesh, at the day of judgment, is denied; and consequently, we must throw aside the sacrament of the LORD's supper. For why should we remember the LORD's death until he comes to judgment, when he is already come to judge our hearts, and will not come a second time? but all this is only the reasoning of unlearned, unstable men, who certainly know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. That we must follow our LORD in the regeneration, be partakers of a new birth, and that CHRIST must come into our hearts, we freely confess; and we hope, when speaking of these things, we speak no more than what we know and feel: but then it is plain, that JESUS CHRIST will come, hereafter, to judgment, and that he ascended into heaven with the body which he had here on earth; for says he, after his resurrection, "Handle me, and see; a spirit has not flesh and bones, as you see me have." And it is plain, that CHRIST's resurrection was an earnest of ours: for says the apostle, "CHRIST is risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that sleep;" and as in *Adam* all die, and are subject to mortality; so all that are in CHRIST, the second *Adam*, who represented believers as their federal head, shall certainly be made alive, or rise again with their bodies at the last day.

Here then, O believers! is one, though the lowest, degree of that redemption which you are to be partakers of hereafter; I mean, the redemption of your bodies: for this corruptible must put on incorruption, this mortal must put on immortality. Your bodies, as well as souls, were given to JESUS CHRIST by the Father; they have been companions in watching, and fasting, and praying: your bodies therefore, as well as souls, shall JESUS CHRIST raise up at the last day. Fear not, therefore, O believers, to look into the grave; for to you it is no other than a consecrated dormitory, where your bodies shall sleep quietly until the morning of the resurrection; when the voice of the archangel shall sound, and the trump of GOD give the general alarm, "Arise ye dead, and come to judgment;" earth, air, fire, water, shall give up your scattered atoms, and both in body and soul shall you be ever with the LORD. I doubt not, but many of you are groaning under

crazy bodies, and complain often that the mortal body weighs down the immortal ſoul; at leaſt this is my caſe; but let us have a little patience, and we ſhall be delivered from our earthly priſons; ere long, theſe tabernacles of clay ſhall be diſſolved, and we ſhall be clothed with our houſe which is from heaven; hereafter, our bodies ſhall be ſpiritualized, and ſhall be ſo far from hindering our ſouls through weakneſs, that they ſhall become ſtrong; ſo ſtrong, as to bear up under an exceeding and eternal weight of glory; others again may have deformed bodies, emaciated alſo with ſickneſs, and worn out with labour and age; but wait a little, until your bleſſed change by death comes; then your bodies ſhall be renewed and made glorious, like unto CHRIST's glorious body: of which we may form ſome faint idea, from the account given us of our LORD's transfiguration on the mount, when it is ſaid, "His raiment became bright and gliſtering, and his face brighter than the ſun." Well then may a believer break out in the apoſtle's triumphant language, "O death, where is thy ſting! O grave, where is thy victory!"

But what is the redemption of the body, in compariſon of the redemption of the better part, our ſouls? I muſt, therefore, ſay to you believers, as the angel ſaid to *John*, "Come up higher," and let us take as clear a view as we can, at ſuch a diſtance, of the redemption CHRIST has purchaſed for, and will ſhortly put you in actual poſſeſſion of. Already you are juſtified, already you are ſanctified, and thereby freed from the guilt and dominion of ſin: but, as I have obſerved, the being and indwelling of ſin yet remains in you; GOD ſees it proper to leave ſome *Amalekites* in the land, to keep his *Iſrael* in action. The moſt perfect chriſtian, I am perſuaded, muſt agree, according to one of our articles, "That the corruption of nature remains even in the regenerate; that the fleſh luſteth always againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh." So that believers cannot do things for GOD with that perfection they deſire; this grieves their righteous ſouls day by day, and, with the holy apoſtle, makes them cry out, "Who ſhall deliver us from the body of this death!" I thank GOD, our LORD JESUS CHRIST will, but not compleatly before the day of our diſſolution; then will the very being of ſin be deſtroyed, and

and an eternal ſtop put to inbred, indwelling corruption. And is not this a great redemption? I am ſure believers eſteem it ſo: for there is nothing grieves the heart of a child of GOD ſo much, as the remains of indwelling ſin. Again, believers are often in heavineſs through manifold temptations; GOD ſees that it is needful and good for them ſo to be; and though they may be highly favoured, and wrapt up in communion with GOD, even to the third heavens; yet a meſſenger of Satan is often ſent to buffet them, leſt they ſhould be puffed up with the abundance of revelations. But be not weary, be not faint in your minds: the time of your compleat redemption draweth nigh. In heaven the wicked one ſhall ceaſe from troubling you, and your weary ſouls ſhall enjoy an everlaſting reſt; his fiery darts cannot reach thoſe bliſsful regions: Satan will never come any more to appear with, diſturb, or accuſe the ſons of GOD, when once the LORD JESUS CHRIST ſhuts the door. Your righteous ſouls are now grieved, day by day, at the ungodly converſation of the wicked; tares now grow up among the wheat; wolves come in ſheeps clothing: but the redemption ſpoken of in the text, will free your ſouls from all anxiety on theſe accounts; hereafter you ſhall enjoy a perfect communion of ſaints; nothing that is unholy or unſanctified ſhall enter into the Holy of holies, which is prepared for you above: this, and all manner of evil whatſoever, you ſhall be delivered from, when your redemption is hereafter made compleat in heaven; not only ſo, but you ſhall enter into the full enjoyment of all good. It is true, all ſaints will not have the ſame degree of happineſs, but all will be as happy as their hearts can deſire. Believers, you ſhall judge the evil, and familiarly converſe with good, angels: you ſhall ſit down with *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, and all the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect; and, to ſum up all your happineſs in one word, you ſhall ſee GOD the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and, by ſeeing GOD, be more and more like unto him, and paſs from glory to glory, even to all eternity.

But I muſt ſtop: the glories of the upper world croud in ſo faſt upon my ſoul, that I am loſt in the contemplation of them. Brethren, the redemption ſpoken of is unutterable; we cannot here find it out; eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor

has it entered into the hearts of the moſt holy men living, to conceive how great it is. Was I to entertain you whole ages with an account of it, when you come to heaven, you muſt ſay, with the Queen of *Sheba*, "Not half, no, not one thouſandth part was told us." All we can do here, is to go upon mount *Piſgah*, and by the eye of faith, take a diſtant view of the promiſed land: We may ſee it, as *Abraham* did CHRIST, afar off, and rejoice in it; but here we only know in part. Bleſſed be GOD, there is a time coming, when we ſhall know GOD, even as we are known, and GOD be all in all. LORD JESUS, accompliſh the number of thine elect! LORD JESUS, haſten thy kingdom!

And now, where are the ſcoffers of theſe laſt days, who count the lives of chriſtians to be madneſs, and their end to be without honour? Unhappy men! you know not what you do. Were your eyes open, and had you ſenſes to diſcern ſpiritual things, you would not ſpeak all manner of evil againſt the children of GOD, but you would eſteem them as the excellent ones of the earth, and envy their happineſs: your ſouls would hunger and thirſt after it: you alſo would become fools for CHRIST's ſake. You boaſt of wiſdom; ſo did the philoſophers of *Corinth*: but your wiſdom is the fooliſhneſs of folly in the ſight of GOD. What will your wiſdom avail you, if it does not make you wiſe unto ſalvation? Can you, with all your wiſdom, propoſe a more conſiſtent ſcheme to build your hopes of ſalvation on, than what has been now laid before you? Can you, with all the ſtrength of natural reaſon, find out a better way of acceptance with GOD, than by the righteouſneſs of the LORD JESUS CHRIST? Is it right to think your own works can in any meaſure deſerve or procure it? If not, Why will you not believe in him? Why will you not ſubmit to his righteouſneſs? Can you deny that you are fallen creatures? Do not you find that you are full of diſorders, and that theſe diſorders make you unhappy? Do not you find that you cannot change your own hearts? Have you not reſolved many and many a time, and have not your corruptions yet dominion over you? Are you not bond-ſlaves to your luſts, and led captive by the devil at his will? Why then will you not come to CHRIST for ſanctification? Do

you not deſire to die the death of the righteous, and that your future ſtate may be like theirs? I am perſuaded you cannot bear the thoughts of being annihilated, much leſs of being miſerable for ever. Whatever you may pretend, if you ſpeak truth, you muſt confeſs, that conſcience breaks in upon you in your more ſober intervals whether you will or not, and even conſtrains you to believe, that hell is no painted fire. And why then will you not come to CHRIST? He alone can procure you everlaſting redemption. Haſte, haſte away to him, poor beguiled ſinners. You lack wiſdom; aſk it of CHRIST. Who knows but he may give it you? He is able: for he is the wiſdom of the Father; he is that wiſdom which was from everlaſting. You have no righteouſneſs; away, therefore, to CHRIST: "He is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth." You are unholy; flee to the LORD JESUS: He is full of grace and truth; and of his fulneſs all may receive that believe in him. You are afraid to die; let this drive you to CHRIST: He has the keys of death and hell; in him is plenteous redemption; he alone can open the door which leads to everlaſting life. Let not, therefore, the deceived reaſoner boaſt any longer of his pretended reaſon. Whatever you may think, it is the moſt unreaſonable thing in the world, not to believe on JESUS CHRIST, whom GOD hath ſent. Why, why will you die? why will you not come unto him, that you may have life? "Ho! every one that thirſteth, come unto the waters of life and drink freely: come, buy without money and without price." Were theſe bleſſed privileges in the text to be purchaſed with money, you might ſay, We are poor, and cannot buy: or, were they to be conferred only on ſinners of ſuch a rank or degree, then you might ſay, How can ſuch ſinners as we expect to be ſo highly favoured? But they are to be freely given of GOD to the worſt of ſinners. "To us," ſays the Apoſtle; to me a perſecutor, to you *Corinthians*, who were "unclean, drunkards, covetous perſons, idolaters." Therefore, each poor ſinner may ſay then, Why not unto me? Has CHRIST but one bleſſing? What if he has bleſſed millions already, by turning them away from their iniquities; yet, he ſtill continues the ſame: he lives for ever to make interceſſion, and therefore will bleſs you, even you alſo. Though, *Eſau*-like, you have been

been prophane, and hitherto deſpiſed your heavenly Father's birth-right; even now, if you believe, "CHRIST will be made to you of GOD, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption."

But I muſt turn again to believers, for whoſe inſtruction, as I obſerved before, this diſcourſe was particularly intended. You ſee, brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, what great bleſſings are treaſured up for you in JESUS CHRIST your head, and what you are entitled to by believing on his name. Take heed, therefore, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. Think often how highly you are favoured; and remember, you have not choſen CHRIST, but CHRIST hath choſen you. Put on (as the elect of GOD) humbleneſs of mind, and glory, but let it be only in the LORD: for you have nothing but what you have received of GOD. By nature ye were as fooliſh, as legal, as unholy, and in as damnable a condition as others. Be pitiful, therefore, be courteous; and, as ſanctification is a progreſſive work, beware of thinking you have already attained. Let him that is holy, be holy ſtill; knowing, that he who is moſt pure in heart, ſhall hereafter enjoy the cleareſt viſion of GOD. Let indwelling ſin be your daily burden; and not only bewail and lament, but ſee that you ſubdue it daily by the power of divine grace; and look up to JESUS continually to be the finiſher, as well as author of your faith. Build not on your own faithfulneſs, but on GOD's unchangeableneſs. Take heed of thinking you ſtand by the power of your own free-will. The everlaſting love of GOD the Father, muſt be your only hope and conſolation: let this ſupport you under all trials. Remember that GOD's gifts and callings are without repentance; that CHRIST having once loved you, will love you to the end. Let this conſtrain you to obedience, and make you long and look for that bleſſed time, when he ſhall not only be your wiſdom, and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, but alſo compleat and everlaſting redemption.

Glory be to GOD in the higheſt!

SERMON

SERMON XLV.

The Knowledge of JESUS CHRIST the beſt Knowledge.

1 COR. ii. 2.

I determined not to know any thing among you, ſave JESUS CHRIST, *and him crucified.*

THE perſons to whom theſe words were written, were the members of the church of *Corinth*; who, as appears by the foregoing chapter, were not only divided into different ſects, by one ſaying, "I am of *Paul*, and another, I am of *Apollos*;" but alſo had many amongſt them, who were ſo full of the wiſdom of this world, and ſo wiſe in their own eyes, that they ſet at nought the ſimplicity of the goſpel, and accounted the Apoſtle's preaching fooliſhneſs.

Never had the Apoſtle more need of the wiſdom of the ſerpent, mingled with the innocency of the dove, than now. What is the ſum of all his wiſdom? he tells them, in the words of the text, "I determined not to know any thing amongſt you, ſave JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified."

A reſolution this, worthy of the great St. *Paul*; and no leſs worthy, no leſs neceſſary for every miniſter, and every diſciple of CHRIST, to make always, even unto the end of the world.

In the following diſcourſe, I ſhall,

Firſt, Explain what is meant by "not knowing any thing, ſave JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified."

Secondly, Give ſome reaſons why every chriſtian ſhould determine not to know any thing elſe. And

Thirdly, Conclude with a general exhortation to put this determination into practice.

Firſt, I am to explain what is meant by "not knowing any thing, ſave JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified."

By JESUS CHRIST, we are to underſtand the eternal Son of GOD. He is called JESUS, a Saviour, becauſe he was to ſave us from the guilt and power of our ſins; and, like *Joſhua*, by whom he was remarkably typified, to lead GOD's ſpiritual *Iſrael* through the wilderneſs of this world, to the heavenly *Canaan*, the promiſed inheritance of the children of GOD.

He is called *Chriſt*, which ſignifies anointed, becauſe he was anointed by the Holy Ghoſt at his baptiſm, to be a prophet to inſtruct, a prieſt to make an atonement for, and a king to govern and protect his church. And he was crucified, or hung (O ſtupendous love!) till he was dead upon the croſs, that he might become a curſe for us: for it is written, "Curſed is every man that hangeth upon a tree."

The foundation or firſt cauſe of his ſuffering, was our fall in *Adam*; in whom, as the living oracles of GOD declare, "We all died;" his ſin was imputed to us all." It pleaſed GOD, after he had ſpoken the world into being, to create man after his own divine image, to breathe into him the breath of life, and to place him as our repreſentative in the garden of *Eden*.

But he being left to his own free will, did eat of the forbidden fruit, notwithſtanding GOD had told him, "The day in which he eat thereof, he ſhould ſurely die;" and thereby he, with his whole poſterity, in whoſe name he acted, became liable to the wrath of GOD, and ſunk into a ſpiritual death.

But

But behold the goodneſs, as well as the ſeverity of GOD! For no ſooner had man been convicted as a ſinner, but lo! a Saviour is revealed to him, under the character of the *ſeed of the woman:* the merits of whoſe ſacrifice were then immediately to take place, and who ſhould, in the fulneſs of time, by ſuffering death, ſatisfy for the guilt we had contracted; by obeying the whole moral law, work out for us an everlaſting righteouſneſs; and by becoming a principle of new life in us, deſtroy the power of the devil, and thereby reſtore us to a better ſtate than that in which we were at firſt created.

This is the plain ſcriptural account of that myſtery of godlineſs, GOD manifeſted in the fleſh; and to this our own hearts, unleſs blinded by the god of this world, cannot but yield an immediate aſſent.

For, let us but ſearch our own hearts, and aſk ourſelves, if we could create our own children, whether or not we would not create them with a leſs mixture of good and evil, than we find in ourſelves? Suppoſing GOD then only to have our goodneſs, he could not, at firſt, make us ſo ſinful, ſo polluted as we are. But ſuppoſing him to be as he is, infinitely good, or goodneſs itſelf, then it is abſolutely impoſſible that he ſhould create any thing but what is like himſelf, perfect, entire, lacking nothing. Man then could not come out of the hands of his Maker, ſo miſerably blind and naked, with ſuch a mixture of the beaſt and devil, as he finds now in himſelf, but muſt have fallen from what he was; and as it does not ſuit with the goodneſs and juſtneſs of GOD, to puniſh the whole race of mankind with theſe diſorders merely for nothing; and ſince men bring theſe diſorders into the world with them; it follows, that as they could not ſin themſelves, being yet unborn, ſome other man's ſin muſt have been imputed to them; from whence, as from a fountain, all theſe evils flow.

I know this doctrine of our *original ſin*, or fall in *Adam*, is eſteemed fooliſhneſs by the wiſe diſputer of this world, who will reply, How does it ſuit the goodneſs of GOD, to impute one

one man's ſin to an innocent poſterity? But has it not been proved to a demonſtration, that it is ſo? And therefore, ſuppoſing we cannot reconcile it to our ſhallow comprehenſions, that is no argument at all: for if it appears that GOD has done a thing, we may be ſure it is right, whether we can ſee the reaſons for it or not.

But this is entirely cleared up by what was ſaid before, that no ſooner was the ſin imputed, but a CHRIST was revealed; and this CHRIST, this GOD incarnate, who was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, that he might be freed from the guilt of our original ſin; who was born of the Virgin *Mary*, that he might be the ſeed of the woman only; who ſuffered under *Pontius Pilate*, a *Gentile* governor, to fulfil theſe prophecies, which ſignified what death he ſhould die: This ſame JESUS, who was crucified in weakneſs, but raiſed in power, is that divine perſon, that *Emmanuel*, that GOD with us, whom we preach, in whom ye believe, and whom alone the Apoſtle, in the text, was determined to know.

By which word *know*, we are not to underſtand a bare hiſtorical knowledge; for to know that CHRIST was crucified by his enemies at *Jeruſalem*, in this manner only, will do us no more ſervice, than to know that *Cæſar* was butchered by his friends at *Rome*; but the word *know*, means to know, ſo as to approve of him; as when CHRIST ſays, "Verily, I know you not;" I know you not, ſo as to approve of you. It ſignifies to know him, ſo as to embrace him in all his offices; to take him to be our prophet, prieſt, and king; ſo as to give up ourſelves wholly to be inſtructed, ſaved, and governed by him. It implies an experimental knowledge of his crucifixion, ſo as to feel the power of it, and to be crucified unto the world, as the Apoſtle explains himſelf in the epiſtle to the *Philippians*, where he ſays, "I count all things but dung and droſs, that I might know him, and the power of his reſurrection."

This knowledge the Apoſtle was ſo ſwallowed up in, that he was determined not to know any thing elſe; he was reſolved to make that his only ſtudy, the governing principle of his

his life, the point and end in which all his thoughts, words, and actions, ſhould center.

Secondly, I paſs on to give ſome reaſons why every chriſtian ſhould, with the Apoſtle, determine "not to know any thing, ſave JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified."

Firſt, Without this, our perſons will not be accepted in the ſight of GOD." "This (and conſequently this only) is life eternal, to know thee, the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, whom thou haſt ſent." As alſo St. *Peter* ſays, "There is now no other name given under heaven, whereby we can be ſaved, but that of JESUS CHRIST."

Some, indeed, may pleaſe themſelves in knowing the world, others boaſt themſelves in the knowledge of a multitude of languages; but could we ſpeak with the tongue of men and angels, or did we know the number of the ſtars, and could call them all by their names, yet, without this experimental knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified, it would profit us nothing.

The former, indeed, may procure us a little honour, which cometh of man; but the latter only can render us acceptable in the ſight of GOD: for, if we are ignorant of CHRIST, GOD will be to us a conſuming fire.

CHRIST is the way, the truth, and the life; "No one cometh to the Father, but through him;" "He is the Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world;" and none ever were, or ever will be received up into glory, but by an experimental application of his merits to their hearts.

We might as well think to rebuild the tower of *Babel*, or reach heaven with our hands, as to imagine we could enter therein by any other door, than that of the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST. Other knowledge may make you wiſe in your own eyes, and puff you up; but this alone edifieth, and maketh wiſe unto ſalvation.

As the meaneſt chriſtian, if he knows but this, though he know nothing elſe, will be accepted; ſo the greateſt maſter in *Iſrael*, the moſt letter-learned teacher, without this, will be rejected. His philoſophy is mere nonſenſe, his wiſdom mere fooliſhneſs in the ſight of GOD.

The author of the words now before us, was a remarkable inſtance of this; never, perhaps, was a greater ſcholar, in all what the world calls fine learning, than he: for he was bred up at the feet of *Gamaliel*, and profited in the knowledge of books, as well as in the *Jewiſh* religion, above many of his equals, as appears by the language, rhetoric, and ſpirit of his writings; and yet, when he came to know what it was to be a chriſtian, "He accounted all things but loſs, ſo he might win CHRIST." And, though he was now at *Corinth*, that ſeat of polite learning, yet he was abſolutely determined not to know any thing, or to make nothing his ſtudy, but what taught him to know JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified.

Hence then, appears the folly of thoſe who ſpend their whole lives in heaping up other knowledge; and, inſtead of ſearching the ſcriptures, which teſtify of JESUS CHRIST, and are alone able to make them wiſe unto ſalvation, diſquiet themſelves in a purſuit after the knowledge of ſuch things, as when known, concern them no more, than to know that a bird dropped a feather upon one of the *Pyrenean* mountains.

Hence it is, that ſo many, who profeſs themſelves wiſe, becauſe they can diſpute of the cauſes and effects, the moral fitneſs and unfitneſs of things, appear mere fools in the things of GOD; ſo that when you come to converſe with them about the great work of redemption wrought out for us by JESUS CHRIST, and of his being a propitiation for our ſins, a fulfiller of the covenant of works, and a principle of new life to our ſouls, they are quite ignorant of the whole matter; and prove, to a demonſtration, that, with all their learning, they know nothing yet, as they ought to know.

But, alas! how muſt it ſurprize a man, when the Moſt High is about to take away his ſoul, to think that he has paſſed

paſſed for a wiſe man, and a learned diſputer in this world, and yet is left deſtitute of that knowledge which alone can make him appear with boldneſs before the judgment-ſeat of JESUS CHRIST? How muſt it grieve him, in a future ſtate, to ſee others, whom he deſpiſed as illiterate men, becauſe they experimentally knew CHRIST, and him crucified, exalted to the right-hand of GOD; and himſelf, with all his fine accompliſhments, becauſe he knew every thing, perhaps, but CHRIST, thruſt down into hell?

Well might the Apoſtle, in a holy triumph, cry out, "Where is the wiſe? Where is the ſcribe? Where is the diſputer of this world?" For, GOD will then make fooliſh the wiſdom of this world, and bring to nought the wiſdom of thoſe who were ſo knowing in their own eyes.

I have made this digreſſion from the main point before us, not to condemn or decry human literature, but to ſhew, that it ought to be uſed only in ſubordination to divine; and that a chriſtian, if the Holy Spirit guided the pen of the Apoſtle, when he wrote this epiſtle, ought to ſtudy no books, but ſuch as lead him to a farther knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified.

And there is the more reaſon for this, becauſe of the great miſchief the contrary practice has done to the church of GOD: for, what was it but this learning, or rather this ignorance, that kept ſo many of the Scribes and Phariſees from the ſaving knowledge of JESUS CHRIST? And what is it, but this human wiſdom, this ſcience, falſely ſo called, that blinds the underſtanding, and corrupts the hearts of ſo many modern unbelievers, and makes them unwilling to ſubmit to the righteouſneſs which is of GOD by faith in CHRIST JESUS? But,

Secondly, Without this knowledge our performances, as well as perſons, will not be acceptable in the ſight of GOD.

"Through faith," ſays the Apoſtle, that is, through a lively faith in a Mediator to come, "*Abel* offered a more ac-

ceptable ſacrifice than *Cain*." And it is through a like faith, or an experimental knowledge of the ſame divine Mediator, that our ſacrifices of prayer, praiſe, and thankſgivings, come up as an incenſe before the throne of grace.

Two perſons may go up to the temple to pray; but he only will return home juſtified, who, in the language of our collects, ſincerely offers up his prayers through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

For it is this great atonement, this all-ſufficient ſacrifice, which alone can give us boldneſs to approach with our prayers to the Holy of Holies: and he that preſumes to go without this, acts *Korah*'s crime over again; offers unto GOD ſtrange fire, and, conſequently, will be rejected by him.

Farther, as our devotions to GOD will not, ſo neither, without this knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, will our acts of charity to men be accepted by him. For did we give all our goods to feed the poor, and yet were deſtitute of this knowledge, it would profit us nothing.

This our bleſſed LORD himſelf intimates in the xxvth of *Matthew*, where he tells thoſe who had been rich in good works, "That inaſmuch as they did it unto one of the leaſt of his brethren, they did it unto him." From whence we may plainly infer, that it is ſeeing CHRIST in his members, and doing good to them out of an experimental knowledge of his love to us, that alone will render our alms-deeds rewardable at the laſt day.

Laſtly, As neither our acts of piety nor charity, ſo neither will our civil nor moral actions be acceptable to GOD, without this experimental knowledge of JESUS CHRIST.

Our modern pretenders to reaſon, indeed, ſet up another principle to act from; they talk, I know not what, Of doing moral and civil duties of life, from the moral fitneſs and unfitneſs of things. But ſuch men are blind, however they may pretend to ſee; and going thus about to eſtabliſh their own righte-

righteouſneſs, are utterly ignorant of the righteouſneſs which is of GOD by faith in CHRIST JESUS.

For though we grant that morality is a ſubſtantial part of chriſtianity, and that CHRIST came not to deſtroy, or take off the moral law, as a rule of action, but to explain, and ſo fulfil it; yet we affirm, that our moral and civil actions are now no farther acceptable in the ſight of GOD the Father, than as they proceed from the principle of a new nature, and an experimental knowledge of, or vital faith in his dear Son.

The death of JESUS CHRIST has turned our whole lives into one continued ſacrifice; and whether we eat or drink, whether we pray to GOD, or do any thing to man, it muſt all be done out of a love for, and knowledge of him who died and roſe again, to render all, even our moſt ordinary deeds, acceptable in the ſight of GOD.

If we live by this principle, if CHRIST be the Alpha and Omega of all our actions, then our leaſt are acceptable ſacrifices; but if this principle be wanting, our moſt pompous ſervices avail nothing: we are but ſpiritual idolaters; we ſacrifice to our own net; we make an idol of ourſelves, by making ourſelves, and not CHRIST, the end of our actions: and, therefore, ſuch actions are ſo far from being accepted by GOD, that, according to the language of one of the Articles of our Church, "We doubt not but they have the nature of "ſin, becauſe they ſpring not from an experimental faith in, "and knowledge of JESUS CHRIST."

Were we not fallen creatures, we might then act, perhaps, from other principles; but ſince we are fallen from GOD in *Adam*, and are reſtored again only by the obedience and death of JESUS CHRIST, the face of things is entirely changed, and all we think, ſpeak, or do, is only accepted in and through him.

Juſtly, therefore, may I, in the

Third and *Laſt* place, Exhort you to put the Apoſtle's reſolution in practice, and beſeech you, with him, to determine,

" Not to know any thing, ſave JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified."

I ſay, *determine*; for unleſs you ſit down firſt, and count the coſt, and from a well-grounded conviction of the excellency of this, above all other knowledge whatſoever, reſolve to make this your chief ſtudy, your only end, your one thing needful, every frivolous temptation will draw you aſide from the purſuit after it.

Your friends and carnal acquaintance, and, above all, your grand adverſary the devil, will be perſuading you to determine not to know any thing, but how to lay up goods for many years, and to get a knowledge and taſte of the pomps and vanities of this wicked world; but do you determine not to follow, or be led by them; and the more they perſuade you to know other things, the more do you " determine not to know any thing, ſave JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified." For, this knowledge never faileth; but whether they be riches, they ſhall fail; whether they be pomps, they ſhall ceaſe; whether they be vanities, they ſhall fade away: but the knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified, abideth for ever.

Whatever, therefore, you are ignorant of, be not ignorant of this. If you know CHRIST, and him crucified, you know enough to make you happy, ſuppoſing you know nothing elſe; and without this, all your other knowledge cannot keep you from being everlaſtingly miſerable.

Value not then, the contempt of friends, which you muſt neceſſarily meet with upon your open profeſſion to act according to this determination. For your Maſter, whoſe you are, was deſpiſed before you; and all that will know nothing elſe but JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified, muſt, in ſome degree or other, ſuffer perſecution.

It is neceſſary that offences ſhould come, to try what is in our hearts, and whether we will be faithful ſoldiers of JESUS CHRIST or not.

Dare ye then to confeſs our bleſſed Maſter before men, and to ſhine as lights in the world, amidſt a crooked and perverſe generation? Let us not be content with following him afar off; for then we ſhall, as *Peter* did, ſoon deny him; but let us be altogether chriſtians, and let our ſpeech, and all our actions declare to the world whoſe diſciples we are, and that we have indeed "determined not to know any thing, ſave JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified." Then, well will it be with us, and happy, unſpeakably happy ſhall we be, even here; and what is infinitely better, when others that deſpiſed us, ſhall be calling for the mountains to fall on them, and the hills to cover them, we ſhall be exalted to ſit down on the right-hand of GOD, and ſhine as the ſun in the firmament, in the kingdom of our moſt adorable Redeemer, for ever and ever.

Which GOD of his infinite mercy grant, &c.

SERMON XLVI.

Of Juſtification by CHRIST.

1 COR. vi. 11.

But ye are juſtified.

The whole verſe is: *And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of our* LORD JESUS CHRIST, *and by the Spirit of our* GOD.

IT has been objected by ſome, who diſſent from, nay, I may add, by others alſo, who actually are friends to the preſent eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment, that the miniſters of the Church of *England* preach themſelves, and not CHRIST JESUS the LORD; that they entertain their people with lectures of mere morality, without declaring to them the glad tidings of ſalvation by JESUS CHRIST. How well grounded ſuch an objection may be, is not my buſineſs to enquire: All I ſhall ſay at preſent to the point is, that whenever ſuch a grand objection is urged againſt the whole body of the clergy in general, every honeſt miniſter of JESUS CHRIST ſhould do his utmoſt to cut off all manner of occaſion, from thoſe who deſire an occaſion to take offence at us; that ſo by hearing us continually ſounding forth the word of truth, and declaring with all boldneſs and aſſurance of faith, "that there is no other name given under heaven, whereby they can be ſaved, but that of JESUS CHRIST," they may be aſhamed of this their ſame confident boaſting againſt us.

It was an eye to this objection, joined with the agreeableneſs and delightfulneſs of the ſubject (for who can but delight to

to talk of that which the bleſſed angels deſire to look into?) that induces me to diſcourſe a little on that great and fundamental article of our faith; namely, our being freely juſtified by the precious blood of JESUS CHRIST. "But ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and by the Spirit of our GOD."

The words beginning with the particle *but*, have plainly a reference to ſomething before; it may not therefore be improper, before I deſcend to particulars, to conſider the words as they ſtand in relation to the context. The apoſtle, in the verſes immediately foregoing, had been reckoning up many notorious ſins, drunkenneſs, adultery, fornication, and ſuch like, the commiſſion of which, without a true and hearty repentance, he tells the *Corinthians*, would entirely ſhut them out of the kingdom of GOD. But then, leſt they ſhould, on the one hand, grow ſpiritually proud by ſeeing themſelves differ from their unconverted brethren, and therefore be tempted to ſet them at nought, and ſay with the ſelf-conceited hypocrite in the prophet, "Come not nigh me, for I am holier than thou;" or, on the other hand, by looking back on the multitude of their paſt offences, ſhould be apt to think their ſins were too many and grievous to be forgiven: he firſt, in order to keep them humble, reminds them of their ſad ſtate before converſion, telling them in plain terms, "ſuch (or as it might be read, theſe things) were ſome of you;" not only one, but all that ſad catalogue of vices I have been drawing up, ſome of you were once guilty of; but then, at the ſame time, to preſerve them from deſpair, behold he brings them glad tidings of great joy: "But ye are waſhed; but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, and by the Spirit of our GOD."

The former part of this text, our being *ſanctified*, I have in ſome meaſure treated of already; I would now enlarge on our being freely juſtified by the precious obedience and death of JESUS CHRIST: "But ye are juſtified in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

From which words I ſhall conſider three things:

Firſt, What is meant by the word *juſtified*.

Secondly, I ſhall endeavour to prove that all mankind in general, and every individual perſon in particular, ſtands in need of being juſtified.

Thirdly, That there is no poſſibility of obtaining this juſtification, which we ſo much want, but by the all-perfect obedience, and precious death of JESUS CHRIST.

Firſt, I am to conſider what is meant by the word juſtified.

"But ye are juſtified," ſays the apoſtle; which is, as though he had ſaid, you have your ſins forgiven, and are looked upon by GOD as though you never had offended him at all: for that is the meaning of the word juſtified, in almoſt all the paſſages of holy ſcripture where this word is mentioned. Thus, when this ſame apoſtle writes to the *Romans*, he tells them, that "whom GOD called, thoſe he alſo juſtified:" And that this word juſtified, implies a blotting out of all our tranſgreſſions, is manifeſt from what follows, "them he alſo glorified," which could not be if a juſtified perſon was not looked upon by GOD, as though he never had offended him at all. And again, ſpeaking of *Abraham*'s faith, he tells them, that "*Abraham* believed on Him that juſtifies the ungodly," who acquits and clears the ungodly man; for it is a law-term, and alludes to a judge acquitting an accuſed criminal of the thing laid to his charge. Which expreſſion the apoſtle himſelf explains by a quotation out of the *Pſalms*: "Bleſſed is the man to whom the LORD imputeth no ſin." From all which proofs, and many others that might be urged, it is evident, that by being juſtified, we are to underſtand, being ſo acquitted in the ſight of GOD as to be looked upon as though we never had offended him at all. And in this ſenſe we are to underſtand that article, which we profeſs to believe

ieve in our creed, when each of us declare in his own ſon, I believe the forgiveneſs of ſins. This leads me to

econd thing propoſed, to prove that all mankind in ge- al, and every individual perſon in particular, ſtands in d of being juſtified.

And indeed the apoſtle ſuppoſes this in the words of the t: "But ye are juſtified," thereby implying that the *Co- thians* (and conſequently all mankind, there being no dif- nce, as will be ſhewn hereafter) ſtood in need of being ified.

But not to reſt in bare ſuppoſitions, in my farther enlarge- nt on this head, I ſhall endeavour to prove, that we all id in need of being juſtified on account of the ſin of our ures, and the ſin of our lives.

I. *Firſt*, I affirm that we all ſtand in need of being juſti- l, on account of the ſin of our natures: for we are all rgeable with original ſin, or the ſin of our firſt parents. hich, though a propoſition that may be denied by a ſelf- ifying infidel, who "will not come to CHRIST that he y have life;" yet can never be denied by any one who ieves that St. *Paul*'s epiſtles were written by divine in- ration; where we are told, that "in *Adam* all died;" t is, *Adam*'s ſin was imputed to all: and leſt we ſhould get to make a particular application, it is added in ano- r place, "that there is none that doeth good (that is, by ure) no, not one: That we are all gone out of the way, original righteouſneſs) and are by nature the children of ath." And even *David*, who was a man after GOD's own rt, and, if any one could, might ſurely plead an exemp- n from this univerſal corruption, yet he confeſſes, that e was ſhapen in iniquity, and that in ſin did his mother nceive him." And, to mention but one text more, as mediately applicable to the preſent purpoſe, St. *Paul*, in epiſtle to the *Romans*, ſays, that "Death came upon all n, for the diſobedience of one, namely, of *Adam*, even upon

upon thoſe, (that is, little children) who had not ſinned after the ſimilitude of *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion;" who had not been guilty of actual ſin, and therefore could not be puniſhed with temporal death (which came into the world, as this ſame apoſtle elſewhere informs us, only by ſin) had not the diſobedience of our firſt parents been imputed to them. So that what has been ſaid in this point ſeems to be excellently ſummed up in that article of our church, where ſhe declares, that "Original ſin ſtandeth not in the following of *Adam*, "but it is the fault and corruption of every man, that na-"turally is engendered of the offspring of *Adam*; whereby "man is very far gone from original righteouſneſs, and is "of his own nature inclined to evil, ſo that the fleſh luſteth "always contrary to the ſpirit; and therefore in every perſon "born into this world, it deſerveth GOD's wrath and damna-"tion."

I have been more particular in treating of this point, becauſe it is the very foundation of the chriſtian religion: For I am verily perſuaded, that it is nothing but a want of being well grounded in the doctrine of original ſin, and of the helpleſs, nay, I may ſay, damnable condition, each of us comes into the world in, that makes ſo many infidels oppoſe, and ſo many who call themſelves chriſtians, ſo very lukewarm in their love and affections to JESUS CHRIST. It is this, and I could almoſt ſay, this only, that makes infidelity abound among us ſo much as it does. For, alas! we are miſtaken if we imagine that men now commence or continue infidels, and ſet up corrupted reaſon in oppoſition to divine revelation merely for want of evidence, (for I believe it might eaſily be proved, that a modern unbeliever is the moſt credulous creature living;) no, it is only for want of an humble mind, of a ſenſe of their original depravity, and a willingneſs to own themſelves ſo depraved, that makes them ſo obſtinately ſhut their eyes againſt the light of the glorious goſpel of CHRIST. Whereas, on the contrary, were they but once pricked to the heart with a due and lively ſenſe of their natural corruption and liableneſs to condemnation, we ſhould have them no more ſcoffing at divine revelation, and looking on it as an idle tale; but they would cry out with

the trembling jaylor, "What ſhall I do to be ſaved?" It was an error in this fundamental point, that made ſo many reſiſt the evidence the Son of GOD himſelf gave of his divine miſſion, when he tabernacled amongſt us. Every word he ſpake, every action he did, every miracle he wrought, proved that he came from GOD. And why then did ſo many harden their hearts, and would not believe his report? Why, he himſelf informs us, "They will not come unto me that they may have life:" They will obſtinately ſtand out againſt thoſe means GOD had appointed for their ſalvation: And St. *Paul* tells us, "that if the goſpel be hid, it is hid to them that are loſt; in whom the GOD of this world hath blinded the eyes of them which believe not, leſt the light of the glorious goſpel of CHRIST, who is the image of GOD, ſhould ſhine upon them." 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4.

If it be aſked, how it ſuits with the divine goodneſs, to impute the guilt of one man's ſin, to an innocent poſterity? I ſhould think it ſufficient to make uſe of the apoſtle's words: "Nay, but O man, who art thou that replieſt againſt GOD? Shall the thing formed ſay to him that formed it, why haſt thou made me thus?" But to come to a more direct reply: Perſons would do well to conſider that in the firſt covenant GOD made with man, *Adam* acted as a public perſon, as the common repreſentative of all mankind, and conſequently we muſt ſtand or fall with him. Had he continued in his obedience, and not eaten the forbidden fruit, the benefits of that obedience would doubtleſs have been imputed to us: But ſince he did not perſiſt in it, but broke the covenant made with him, and us in him; who dares charge the righteous Judge of all the earth with injuſtice for imputing that to us alſo? I proceed,

Secondly, To prove that we ſtand in need of being juſtified, on account of the ſin of our lives.

That GOD, as he made man, has a right to demand his obedience, I ſuppoſe is a truth no one will deny: that he hath alſo given us both a natural and a written law, whereby we are to be judged, cannot be queſtioned by any one who believes

believes *St. Paul*'s epiſtle to the *Romans* to be of divine authority: For in it we are told of a law written in the heart, and a law given by *Moſes*; and that each of us hath broken theſe laws, is too evident from our ſad and frequent experience. Accordingly the holy ſcriptures inform us that "there is no man which liveth and ſinneth not;" that "in many things we offend all;" that "if we ſay we have no ſin we deceive ourſelves," and ſuch like. And if we are thus offenders againſt GOD, it follows, that we ſtand in need of forgiveneſs for thus offending Him; unleſs we ſuppoſe GOD to enact laws, and at the ſame time not care whether they are obeyed or no; which is as abſurd as to ſuppoſe that a prince ſhould eſtabliſh laws for the proper government of his country, and yet let every violator of them come off with impunity. But GOD has not dealt ſo fooliſhly with his creatures: no, as he gave us a law, he demands our obedience to that law, and has obliged us univerſally and perſeveringly to obey it, under no leſs a penalty than incurring his curſe and eternal death for every breach of it: For thus ſpeaks the ſcripture; "Curſed is he that continueth not in all things that are written in the law to do them;" as the ſcripture alſo ſpeaketh in another place, "The ſoul that ſinneth, it ſhall die." Now it has already been proved, that we have all of us ſinned; and therefore, unleſs ſome means can be found to ſatisfy GOD's juſtice, we muſt periſh eternally.

Let us then ſtand a while, and ſee in what a deplorable condition each of us comes into the world, and ſtill continues, till we are tranſlated into a ſtate of grace. For ſurely nothing can well be ſuppoſed more deplorable, than to be born under the curſe of GOD; to be charged with *original guilt*; and not only ſo, but to be convicted as actual breakers of GOD's law, the leaſt breach of which juſtly deſerves eternal damnation. Surely this can be but a melancholy proſpect to view ourſelves in, and muſt put us upon contriving ſome means whereby we may ſatisfy and appeaſe our offended judge. But what muſt thoſe means be? Shall we repent? Alas! there is not one word of repentance mentioned in the firſt covenant: "The day that thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt ſurely die." So that, if GOD be true, unleſs there be ſome

way found out to ſatisfy divine juſtice, we muſt periſh; and there is no room left for us to expect a change of mind in GOD, though we ſhould ſeek it with tears. Well then, if repentance will not do, ſhall we plead the law of works? Alas! "By the law ſhall no man living be juſtified: for by the law comes the knowledge of Sin." It is that which convicts and condemns, and therefore can by no means juſtify us; and "all our righteouſneſſes (ſays the prophet) are but as filthy rags." Wherewith then ſhall we come before the LORD, and bow down before the moſt high GOD? Shall we come before Him with calves of a year old, with thouſands of rams, or ten thouſands of rivers of oil? Alas! GOD has ſhewed thee, O man, that this will not avail: For he hath declared, "I will take no bullock out of thy houſe, nor he-goat out of thy fold: for all the beaſts of the foreſts are mine, and ſo are the cattle upon a thouſand hills." Will the LORD then be pleaſed to accept our firſt-born for our tranſgreſſion, the fruit of our bodies for the ſin of our ſouls? Even this will not purchaſe our pardon: for he hath declared that "the children ſhall not bear the iniquities of their parents." Beſides, they are ſinners, and therefore, being under the ſame condemnation, equally ſtand in need of forgiveneſs with ourſelves. They are impure, and will the LORD accept the blind and lame for ſacrifice? Shall ſome angel then, or archangel, undertake to fulfill the covenant which we have broken, and make atonement for us? Alas! they are only creatures, though creatures of the higheſt order; and therefore are obliged to obey GOD as well as we; and after they have done all, muſt ſay they have done no more than what was their duty to do. And ſuppoſing it was poſſible for them to die, yet how could the death of a finite creature ſatisfy an infinitely offended juſtice? O wretched men that we are! Who ſhall deliver us? I thank GOD, our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Which naturally leads me to the

Third thing propoſed, which was to endeavour to prove, that there is no poſſibility of obtaining this juſtification, which we ſo much want, but by the all-perfect obedience and pre-

cious

cious death of JESUS CHRIST, "But ye are juſtified in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

But this having been in ſome meaſure proved by what has been ſaid under the foregoing head, wherein I have ſhewn that neither our repentance, righteouſneſs, nor ſacrifice, no not the obedience and death of angels themſelves, could poſſibly procure juſtification for us, nothing remains for me to do under this head, but to ſhew that JESUS CHRIST has procured it for us.

And here I ſhall ſtill have recourſe "to the law and to the teſtimony." For after all the moſt ſubtle diſputations on either ſide, nothing but the lively oracles of GOD can give us any ſatisfaction in this momentous point: it being ſuch an inconceivable myſtery, that the eternal only-begotten Son of GOD ſhould die for ſinful man, that we durſt not have preſumed ſo much as to have thought of it, had not GOD revealed it in his holy word. It is true, reaſon may ſhew us the wound, but revelation only can lead us to the means of our cure. And though the method GOD has been pleaſed to take to make us happy, may be to the infidel a ſtumbling-block, and to the wiſe opiniator and diſputer of this world, fooliſhneſs; yet wiſdom, that is, the diſpenſation of our redemption, will be juſtified, approved of, and ſubmitted to, by all her truly wiſe and holy children, by every ſincere and upright chriſtian.

But to come more directly to the point before us. Two things, as was before obſerved, we wanted, in order to be at peace with GOD.

1. To be freed from the guilt of the ſin of our nature.

2. From the ſin of our lives.

And both theſe (thanks be to GOD for this unſpeakable gift) are ſecured to believers by the obedience and death of JESUS CHRIST. For what ſays the ſcripture?

1. As

1. As to the *firſt*, it informs us, that "as by the diſobedience of one man, (or by one tranſgreſſion, namely, that of *Adam*) many were made ſinners; ſo by the obedience of one, JESUS CHRIST (therein including his paſſive as well as active obedience) many were made righteous." And again, "As by the diſobedience of one man, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation;" or all men were condemned on having *Adam*'s ſin imputed to them; "ſo by the obedience of one, that is, JESUS CHRIST, the free gift of pardon and peace came upon all men, (all ſorts of men) unto juſtification of life." I ſay all ſorts of men; for the apoſtle in this chapter is only drawing a parallel between the firſt and ſecond *Adam* in this reſpect, that they acted both as repreſentatives; and as the poſterity of *Adam* had his ſin imputed to them, ſo thoſe for whom CHRIST died, and whoſe repreſentative he is, ſhall have his merits imputed to them alſo. Whoever run the parallel farther, in order to prove univerſal redemption (whatever arguments they may draw for the proof of it from other paſſages of ſcripture,) if they would draw one from this for that purpoſe, I think they ſtretch their line of interpretation beyond the limits of ſcripture.

2. Pardon for the ſin of our lives was another thing, which we wanted to have ſecured to us, before we could be at peace with GOD.

And this the holy ſcriptures inform us, is abundantly done by the death of JESUS CHRIST. The evangelical prophet foretold that the promiſed Redeemer ſhould be "wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and bruiſed for our iniquities; that the chaſtiſement of our peace ſhould be upon him; and that by his ſtripes we ſhould be healed," *Iſaiah* liii. 6. The angels at his birth ſaid, that he ſhould "ſave his people from their ſins." And St. *Paul* declares, that "this is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that JESUS CHRIST came into the world to ſave ſinners." And here in the words of the text, "Such (or, as I obſerved before, theſe things) were ſome of you; but ye are waſhed, &c." and again, "JESUS CHRIST is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believeth." And, to ſhew us that none

none but JESUS CHRIST can do all this, the apoſtle St. *Peter* ſays, "Neither is their ſalvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we muſt be ſaved, but the name of JESUS CHRIST.

How GOD will be pleaſed to deal with the *Gentiles*, who yet ſit in darkneſs and under the ſhadow of death, and upon whom the ſun of righteouſneſs never yet aroſe, is not for us to enquire. "What have we to do to judge thoſe that are without?" To GOD's mercy let us recommend them, and wait for a ſolution of this and every other difficult point, till the great day of accounts, when all GOD's diſpenſations, both of providence and grace, will be fully cleared up by methods to us, as yet unknown, becauſe unrevealed. However, this we know, that the judge of all the earth will, moſt aſſuredly, do right.

But it is time for me to draw towards a concluſion.

I have now, brethren, by the bleſſing of GOD, diſcourſed on the words of the text in the method I propoſed. Many uſeful inferences might be drawn from what has been delivered; but as I have detained you, I fear, too long already, permit me only to make a reflection or two on what has been ſaid, and I have done.

If then we are freely juſtified by the death and obedience of JESUS CHRIST, let us here pauſe a while; and as before we have reflected on the miſery of a fallen, let us now turn aſide and ſee the happineſs of the believing, ſoul. But alas! how am I loſt to think that GOD the Father, when we were in a ſtate of enmity and rebellion againſt Him, ſhould notwithſtanding yearn in his bowels towards us his fallen, his apoſtate creatures: And becauſe nothing but an infinite ranſom could ſatisfy an infinitely offended juſtice, that ſhould ſend his only and dear Son JESUS CHRIST (who is GOD, bleſſed for ever, and who had lain in his boſom from all eternity) to fulfil the covenant of works, and die a curſed, painful, ignominious death, for us and for our ſalvation! who can avoid crying out, at the conſideration of this myſtery of god-

godlineſs. "Oh the depth of the riches of GOD's love" to us his wretched, miſerable and undone creatures! "How unſearchable is his mercy, and his ways paſt finding out!" Now know we of a truth, O GOD, that thou haſt loved us, "ſince thou haſt not with-held thy Son, thine only Son JESUS CHRIST," from thus doing and dying for us.

But as we admire the Father ſending, let us likewiſe humbly and thankfully adore the Son coming, when ſent to die for man. But O! what thoughts can conceive, what words expreſs the infinite greatneſs of that unparalleled love, which engaged the Son of GOD to come down from the manſions of his Father's glory to obey and die for ſinful man! The *Jews*, when he only ſhed a tear at poor *Lazarus*'s funeral, ſaid, "Behold how he loved him." How much more juſtly then may we cry out, Behold how he loved us! When he not only fulfilled the whole moral law, but did not ſpare to ſhed his own moſt precious blood for us.

And can any poor truly-convicted ſinner, after this, deſpair of mercy? What, can they ſee their Saviour hanging on a tree, with arms ſtretched out ready to embrace them, and yet, on their truly believing on him, doubt of finding acceptance with him? No, away with all ſuch diſhonourable, deſponding thoughts. Look on his hands, bored with pins of iron; look on his ſide, pierced with a cruel ſpear, to let looſe the fluices of his blood, and open a fountain for ſin, and for all uncleanneſs; and then deſpair of mercy if you can! No, only believe in Him, and then, though you have crucified him afreſh, yet will he abundantly pardon you; "though your ſins be as ſcarlet, yet ſhall they be as wool; though deeper than crimſon, yet ſhall they be whiter than ſnow."

Which GOD of his infinite mercy grant, &c.

SERMON XLVII.

The great Duty of Charity recommended.

1 Cor. xiii. 8.

Charity never faileth.

NOTHING is more valuable and commendable, and yet, not one duty is leſs practiſed, than that of charity. We often pretend concern and pity for the miſery and diſtreſs of our fellow-creatures, but yet we ſeldom commiſerate their condition ſo much as to relieve them according to our abilities; but unleſs we aſſiſt them with what they may ſtand in need of, for the body, as well as for the ſoul, all our wiſhes are no more than words of no value or regard, and are not to be eſteemed or regarded: for when we hear of any deplorable circumſtance, in which our fellow-creatures are involved, be they friends or enemies; it is our duty, as chriſtians, to aſſiſt them to the utmoſt of our power.

Indeed, we are not, my brethren, to hurt ourſelves or our families; this is not that charity which is ſo much recommended by St. *Paul*; no, but if we are any ways capable of relieving them without injuring either ourſelves, or families, then it is our duty to do it; and this never faileth, where it proceeds from a right end, and with a right view.

St. *Paul* had been ſhewing, in the preceding chapter, that ſpiritual gifts were divers; that God had diſpoſed of one bleſſing to one, and another to another; and though there was a diverſity of bleſſings, God did not beſtow them to one perſon, but gave to one a bleſſing which he denied to another, and

gave a bleſſing, or a gift to the other which might make him as eminent in one way, as the other's gift made him ſo in another: but though there are theſe divers ſpiritual gifts, they are all given for ſome wiſe end, even to profit withal, and to that end they are thus diverſly beſtowed. We are not, on the one hand, to hide thoſe gifts which GOD has given us: neither are we, on the other, to be ſo laviſh of them, as to ſpend them upon our luſts and pleaſures, to ſatisfy our ſenſual appetites, but they are to be uſed for the glory of GOD, and the good of immortal ſouls. After he had particularly illuſtrated this, he comes to ſhew, that all gifts, however great they may be in themſelves, are of no value unleſs we have charity, as you may ſee particularly, by conſidering from the beginning of this chapter.

But before I go any further, I ſhall inform you what the apoſtle means by charity; and that is, LOVE; if there is true love, there will be charity; there will be an endeavour to aſſiſt, help, and relieve according to that ability wherewith GOD has bleſſed us: and, ſince this is ſo much recommended by the apoſtle, let us ſee how valuable this charity is, and how commendable in all thoſe who purſue it. I ſhall,

I. Conſider this bleſſing as relating to the bodies of men.

II. I ſhall ſhew how much more valuable it is, when relating to the ſouls of men.

III. Shall ſhew you when your charity is of the right kind.

IV. Why this charity, or the grace of love, never faileth.

V. Shall conclude all, with an exhortation to high and low, rich and poor, one with another, to be found in the conſtant practice of this valuable and commendable duty.

Firſt, I ſhall conſider this duty, as relating to the bodies of men. And,

1. O that the *rich* would conſider how praiſe-worthy this duty is, in helping their fellow-creatures! We were created to be a help to each other; GOD has made no one ſo independent as not to need the aſſiſtance of another; the richeſt and moſt powerful man upon the face of this earth, needs the help and aſſiſtance of thoſe who are around him; and though he may be great to-day, a thouſand accidents may make him as low to-morrow; he that is rolling in plenty to-day, may be in as much ſcarcity to-morrow. If our rich men would be more charitable to their poor friends and neighbours, it would be a means of recommending them to the favour of others, if Providence ſhould frown upon them; but alas, our great men had much rather ſpend their money in a playhouſe, at a ball, an aſſembly, or a maſquerade, than relieve a poor diſtreſſed ſervant of JESUS CHRIST. They had rather ſpend their eſtates on their hawks and hounds, on their whores, and earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh pleaſures, than comfort, nouriſh, or relieve one of their diſtreſſed fellow-creatures. What difference is there between the king on the throne, and the beggar on the dunghill, when GOD demands their breaths? There is no difference, my brethren, in the grave, nor will there be any at the day of judgment. You will not be excuſed becauſe you have had a great eſtate, a fine houſe, and lived in all the pleaſures that earth could afford you; no, theſe things will be one means of your condemnation; neither will you be judged according to the largeneſs of your eſtate, but according to the uſe you have made of it.

Now, you may think nothing but of your pleaſures and delights, of living in eaſe and plenty, and never conſider how many thouſands of your fellow-creatures would rejoice at what you are making waſte of, and ſetting no account by. Let me beſeech you, my rich brethren, to conſider the poor of the world, and how commendable and praiſe-worthy it is to relieve thoſe who are diſtreſſed. Conſider, how pleaſing this is to GOD, how delightful it is to man, and how many prayers you will have put up for your welfare, by thoſe perſons whom you relieve; and let this be a conſideration to ſpare a little out of the abundance wherewith GOD has

bleſſed you, or the relief of his poor. He could have placed you in their low condition, and they in your high ſtate; it is only his good pleaſure that has thus made the difference, and ſhall not this make you remember your diſtreſſed fellow-creatures?

Let me beſeech you to conſider, which will ſtand you beſt at the day of judgment, ſo much money expended at a horſe-race, at a cockpit, at a play or maſquerade, or ſo much given for the relief of your fellow-creatures, and for the diſtreſſed members of JESUS CHRIST.

I beſeech you, that you would conſider how valuable and commendable this duty is: do not be angry at my thus exhorting you to that duty, which is ſo much recommended by JESUS CHRIST himſelf, and by all his apoſtles: I ſpeak particularly to you, my rich brethren, to intreat you to conſider thoſe that are poor in this world, and help them from time to time, as their neceſſity calls for it. Conſider, that there is a curſe denounced againſt the riches of thoſe, who do not thus do good with them; namely, "Go to now you rich men, weep and howl for your miſeries that ſhall come upon you; your riches are corrupted, your garments are moth-eaten, your gold and ſilver is cankered, and the ruſt of them ſhall be a witneſs againſt you, and ſhall eat your fleſh, as it were fire; ye have heaped your treaſure together for the laſt day." You ſee the dreadful woe pronounced againſt all thoſe who hoard up the abundance of the things of this life, without relieving the diſtreſſes of thoſe who are in want thereof: and the apoſtle *James* goes on alſo to ſpeak againſt thoſe who have acquired eſtates by fraud, as too many have in theſe days. "Behold the hire of the labourers, which have reaped down your fields, which is by you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them who have reaped, are entered into the ears of the LORD GOD of Sabbaoth. Ye have lived in pleaſure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nouriſhed your hearts, as in a day of ſlaughter." Thus, if you go on to live after the luſt of the fleſh, to pamper your bellies, and make them a God, while the poor all round you are ſtarving,

GOD will make theſe things a witneſs againſt you, which ſhall be as a worm to your ſouls, and gnaw your conſciences to all eternity; therefore, let me once more recommend charity unto the bodies of men, and beſeech you to remember what the bleſſed LORD JESUS CHRIST has promiſed unto thoſe who thus love his members, that "as they have done it to the leaſt of his members, they have done it unto him."

I am not now ſpeaking for myſelf; I am not recommending my little flock in *Georgia* to you; then you might ſay, as many wantonly do, that I wanted the money for myſelf; no, my brethren, I am now recommending the poor of this land to you, your poor neighbours, poor friends, yea, your poor enemies; they are whom I am now ſpeaking for; and when I ſee ſo many ſtarving in the ſtreets, and almoſt naked, my bowels are moved with pity and concern, to conſider, that many in whoſe power it is, to lend their aſſiſting hand, ſhould ſhut up their bowels of compaſſion, and will not relieve their fellow-creatures, though in the moſt deplorable condition for the want thereof.

As I have thus recommended charity particularly to the rich among you; ſo now I would,

2. *Secondly*, Recommend this to another ſet of people among us, who, inſtead of being the moſt forward in acts of charity, are commonly the moſt backward; I mean the *clergy* of this land.

Good GOD! how amazing is the conſideration, that thoſe, whom GOD has called out to labour in ſpiritual things, ſhould be ſo backward in this duty, as fatal experience teacheth. Our clergy (that is the generality thereof) are only ſeeking after preferment, running up and down, to obtain one benefice after another; and to heap up an eſtate, either to ſpend on the pleaſures of life, or to gratify their ſenſual appetites, while the poor of their flock are forgotten; nay, worſe, they are ſcorned, hated, and diſdained.

I am not now, my brethren, ſpeaking of all the clergy; no, bleſſed be GOD, there are ſome among them, who abhor ſuch proceedings, and are willing to relieve the neceſſitous; but GOD knows, theſe are but very few, while many take no thought of the poor among them.

They can viſit the rich and the great, but the poor they cannot bear in their ſight; they are forgetful, wilfully forgetful of the poor members of JESUS CHRIST.

They have gone out of the old paths, and turned into a new polite way, but which is not warranted in the word of GOD: they are ſunk into a fine way of acting; but as fine as it is, it was not the practice of the apoſtles, or of the chriſtians in any age of the church: for they viſited and relieved the poor among them; but how rare is this among us, how ſeldom do we find charity in a clergyman?

It is with grief I ſpeak theſe things, but woful experience is a witneſs to the truth thereof: and if all the clergy of this land were here, I would tell them boldly, that they did not keep in the ways of charity, but were remiſs in their duty; inſtead of "ſelling all and giving to the poor," they will not ſell any thing, nor give at all to the poor.

3. *Thirdly*, I would exhort you who are poor, to be charitable to one another.

Though you may not have money, or the things of this life, to beſtow upon one another; yet you may aſſiſt them, by comforting, and adviſing them not to be diſcouraged though they are low in the world; or in ſickneſs you may help them according as you have time or ability: do not be unkind to one another: do not grieve, or vex, or be angry with each other; for this is giving the world an advantage over you.

And if GOD ſtirs up any to relieve you, do not make an ill uſe of what his providence, by the hands of ſome chriſtian,

hath beſtowed upon you: be always humble and wait on GOD; do not murmur or repine, if you ſee any relieved and you are not; ſtill wait on the LORD, and help one another, according to your abilities, from time to time.

Having ſhewed you how valuable this is to the bodies of men, I now proceed,

Secondly, To ſhew you how much more valuable this charity is, when it extends to the ſouls of men.

And is not the ſoul more valuable than the body? It would be of no advantage, but an infinite diſadvantage, to obtain all the world, if we were to loſe our ſouls. The ſoul is of infinite value, and of infinite concern, and, therefore, we ſhould extend our charity whenever we ſee it needful, and likewiſe ſhould reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all godlineſs and love.

We ſhould, my dear brethren, uſe all means and opportunities for the ſalvation of our own ſouls, and of the ſouls of others. We may have a great deal of charity and concern for the bodies of our fellow-creatures, when we have no thought, or concern, for their immortal ſouls: But O how ſad is it, to have thought for a mortal, but not for the immortal part; to have charity for the body of our fellow-creatures, while we have no concern for their immortal ſouls; it may be, we help them to ruin them, but have no concern in the ſaving of them.

You may love to ſpend a merry evening, to go to a play, or a horſe-race, with them; but on the other hand, you cannot bear the thoughts of going to a ſermon, or a religious ſociety, with them; no, you would ſing the ſongs of the drunkard, but you will not ſing hymns, with them; this is not polite enough, this is unbecoming a gentleman of taſte, unfaſhionable, and only practiſed among a parcel of enthuſiaſts and madmen.

Thus

Thus, you will be ſo uncharitable as to join hand in hand with thoſe who are haſtening to their own damnation, while you will not be ſo charitable as to aſſiſt them in being brought from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD. But this, this, my dear brethren, is the greateſt charity, as can be, to ſave a ſoul from death: this is of far greater advantage, than relieving the body of a fellow-creature: for the moſt miſerable object as could be, death would deliver it from all. But death, to thoſe who are not born again, would be ſo far from being a releaſe from all miſery, that it would be an inlet to all torment, and that to all eternity. Therefore, we ſhould aſſiſt, as much as poſſible, to keep a ſoul from falling into the hands of Satan: for he is the grand enemy of ſouls. How ſhould this excite you to watch over your own and others ſouls? for unleſs you are earneſt with GOD, Satan will be too hard for you. Surely, it is the greateſt charity to watch over one another's words and actions, that we may forewarn each other when danger is nigh, or when the enemy of ſouls approaches.

And if you have once known the value of your own ſouls, and know what it is to be ſnatched as brands out of the burning fire, you will be ſolicitous that others may be brought out of the ſame ſtate. It is not the leading of a moral life, being honeſt, and paying every man his juſt due; this is not a proof of your being in a ſtate of grace, or of being born again, and renewed in the ſpirit of your minds: No, you may die honeſt, juſt, charitable, and yet not be in a ſtate of ſalvation.

It is not the preaching of that morality, which moſt of our pulpits now bring forth, that is ſufficient to bring you from ſin unto GOD. I ſaw you willing to learn, and yet were ignorant of the neceſſity of being born again, regenerated, of having all old things done away, and all things becoming new in your ſouls: I could not bear, my brethren, to ſee you in the highway to deſtruction, and none to bring you back. It was love to your ſouls, it was a deſire to ſee CHRIST formed

formed in you, which brought me into the fields, the high-ways, and hedges, to preach unto you JESUS, a crucified JESUS as dying for you. It was charity, indeed it was charity to your ſouls, which has expoſed me to the preſent ill treatment of my letter-learned brethren.

Therefore, let me adviſe you to be charitable to the ſouls of one another; that is, by adviſing them with all love and tenderneſs, to follow after CHRIST, and the things which belong to their immortal peace, before they be for ever hid from their eyes.

I now proceed, in the

Third place, to ſhew when your charity is of the right kind.

And here, my brethren, I ſhall ſhew, *Firſt*, When it is not; and, *Secondly*, When it is of the right kind.

1. *Firſt*, Your charity is not of the right kind, when it proceeds from worldly views or ends.

If it is to be ſeen of men, to receive any advantage from them, to be eſteemed, or to gain a reputation in the world; or if you have any pride in it, and expect to reap benefit from GOD merely for it; if all, or each of theſe is the end of your charity, then it is all in vain; your charity does not proceed from a right end, but you are hereby deceiving your own ſouls. If you give an alms purely to be obſerved by man, or as expecting favour from GOD, merely on the account thereof, then you have not the glory of GOD, or the benefit of your fellow-creatures at heart, but merely yourſelf: this, this is not charity. Nor,

Secondly, Is that true charity, when we give any thing to our fellow-creatures purely to indulge them in vice: this is ſo far from being charity, that it is a ſin, both againſt GOD, and againſt our fellow-creatures. And yet, this is as common,

as

as it is ſinful, to carry our friends, under a ſpecious pretence of charity, to one or the other entertainment, with no other view, but to make them guilty of exceſs. Hereby you are guilty of a double ſin: we are not to ſin ourſelves, much leſs ſhould we endeavour to make another ſin likewiſe. But,

Thirdly, Our charity comes from a right end, when it proceeds from love to GOD, and for the welfare both of the body and ſoul of our fellow-creatures.

When this is the ſole end of relieving our diſtreſſed fellow-creatures, then our charity comes from a right end, and we may expect to reap advantage by it: this is the charity which is pleaſing to GOD. GOD is well pleaſed, when all our actions proceed from love, love to himſelf, and love to immortal ſouls.

Conſider, my dear brethren, that it was love for ſouls, that brought the bleſſed JESUS down from the boſom of his Father; that made him, who was equal in power and glory, to come and take upon him our nature; that cauſed the LORD of life to die the painful, ignominious, and accurſed death of the croſs. It was love to immortal ſouls, that brought this bleſſed JESUS among us. And O that we might hence conſider how great the value of ſouls was and is: it was that which made JESUS to bleed, pant, and die. And ſurely ſouls muſt be of infinite worth, which made the Lamb of GOD to die ſo ſhameful a death.

And ſhall not this make you have a true value for ſouls? It is of the greateſt worth: and this, this is the greateſt charity, when it comes from love to GOD, and from love to ſouls. This will be a charity, the ſatisfaction of which will laſt to all eternity. O that this may make you have ſo much regard for the value of ſouls, as not to neglect all opportunities for the doing of them good: here is ſomething worth having charity for, becauſe they remain to all eternity. Therefore, let me earneſtly beſeech you both to conſider the worth of immortal ſouls, and let your charity extend to them, that by your advice and admonition, you may be an inſtru-

ment,

ment, in the hands of GOD, in bringing ſouls to the LORD JESUS.

I am in the next place to conſider,

Fourthly, Why this charity, or grace of love never faileth.

And it never faileth in reſpect of its proceeding from an unchangeable GOD. We are not to underſtand, that our charity is always the ſame; No, there may, and frequently are, ebbs and flowings; but ſtill it never totally faileth: No, the grace of love remaineth for ever. There is, and will be, a charity to all who have erred and run aſtray from GOD. We cannot be eaſy to ſee ſouls in the highway to deſtruction, and not uſe our utmoſt endeavour to bring them back from ſin, and ſhew them the dreadful conſequence of running into evil. Chriſtians cannot bear to ſee thoſe ſouls for whom CHRIST died, periſh for want of knowledge: and if they ſee any of the bodies of their fellow-creatures in want, they will do the utmoſt in their power to relieve them.

Charity will never fail, among thoſe who have a true love to the LORD JESUS, and know the value of ſouls: they will be charitable to thoſe who are in diſtreſs. And thus you ſee, that true charity, if it proceeds from a right end, never faileth.*

I now proceed, my brethren, in the

Laſt place, to exhort all of you, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, to practice this valuable and commendable duty of charity.

It is not rolling in your coaches, taking your pleaſure, and not conſidering the miſeries of your fellow-creatures, that is commendable or praiſe-worthy; but the relieving your diſtreſſed poor fellow-creatures, is valuable and praiſe-worthy wherever it is found. But alas! how very few of our gay and polite gentlemen conſider their poor friends; rather they

deſpiſe,

deſpiſe, and do not regard them. They can indulge themſelves in the follies of life, and had much rather ſpend their eſtates in luſts and pleaſures, while the poor all round them are not thought worthy to be ſet with the dogs of their flock. If you have an abundance of the things of this world, then you are eſteemed as companions for the polite and gay in life; but if you are poor, then you muſt not expect to find any favour, but be hated, or not thought fit for company or converſation: and if you have an abundance of the things of this life, and do not want any aſſiſtance, then you have many ready to help you. My dear brethren, I do not doubt but your own experience is a proof of my aſſertions; as alſo, that if any come into diſtreſs, then thoſe, who promiſed to give relief, quite forget what they promiſe, and will deſpiſe, becauſe Providence has frowned. But this is not acting like thoſe who are bound for the heavenly *Jeruſalem*; thus our hearts and our actions give our lips the lie: for if we profeſs the name of CHRIST, and do not depart from all iniquity, we are not thoſe, who are worthy of being eſteemed chriſtians indeed.

For, if we have not charity, we are not chriſtians: charity is the great duty of chriſtians: and where is our chriſtianity, if we want charity? Therefore, let me beſeech you to exerciſe charity to your diſtreſſed fellow-creatures. Indeed, my dear brethren, this is truly commendable, truly valuable; and therefore, I beſeech you, in the bowels of tender mercy to CHRIST, to conſider his poor diſtreſſed members; exerciſe, exerciſe, I beſeech you, this charity: if you have no compaſſion, you are not true diſciples of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. I humbly beg you to conſider thoſe who want relief, and are really deſtitute, and relieve them according to your abilities. Conſider, that the more favourable Providence has been to you, it ſhould make you the more earneſt and ſolicitous to relieve thoſe whom you may find in diſtreſs: it is of the utmoſt conſequence, what is well pleaſing to your fellow-creatures, and doing your duty to GOD.

When you are called from hence, then all riches and grandeur will be over; the grave will make no diſtinction;

great

great eſtates will be of no ſignification in the other world; and if you have made a bad uſe of the talent which GOD hath put into your hands, it will be only an aggravation of your condemnation at the great day of account, when GOD ſhall come to demand your ſouls, and to call you to an account, for the uſe to which you have put the abundance of the things of this life.

To conclude, let me once more beſeech each of you to act according to the circumſtances of life, which GOD, in his rich and free mercy, has given you.

If you were ſenſible of the great conſequences which would attend your acting in this charitable manner, and conſidered it as a proof of your love to GOD, the loving his members; you could not be uncharitable in your tempers, nor fail to relieve any of your diſtreſſed fellow creatures.

Conſider how eaſy it is for many of you, by putting your mites together, to help one who is in diſtreſs; and how can you tell, but that the little you give, may be the means of bringing one from diſtreſs into flouriſhing circumſtances; and then, if there is a true ſpirit of a chriſtian in them, they can never be ſufficiently thankful to GOD the author, and to you as the inſtrument, in being ſo great a friend to them in their melancholy circumſtances: conſider alſo, once more, how much better your account will be at the day of judgment, and what peace of conſcience you will enjoy. How ſatisfactory muſt be the thought of having relieved the widow and the fatherleſs? This is recommended by the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and has been practiſed in all ages of the church: and therefore, my brethren, be ye now found in the practice of this duty.

I have been the larger upon this, becauſe our enemies ſay we deny all moral actions; but, bleſſed be GOD, they ſpeak againſt us without cauſe: we highly value them; but we ſay, that faith in CHRIST, the love of GOD, and being born again, are of infinite more worth; but you cannot be true chriſtians

chriſtians without having charity to your fellow-creatures, be they friends or enemies, if in diſtreſs. And, therefore, exert yourſelves in this duty, as is commanded by the bleſſed JESUS: and if you have true charity, you ſhall live and reign with him for ever.

Now to GOD the Father, GOD the Son, and GOD the Holy Ghoſt, be all honour, power, glory, might, majeſty, and dominion, both now and for evermore. *Amen.*

SERMON

SERMON XLVIII.

Satan's Devices.

2 COR. ii. 11.

Left Satan ſhould get an advantage over us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

THE occaſion of theſe words was as follows: In the church of *Corinth* there was an unhappy perſon, who had committed ſuch inceſt, as was not ſo much as named among the *Gentiles*, in taking his father's wife; but either on account of his wealth, power, or ſome ſuch reaſons, like many notorious offenders now-adays, he had not been expoſed to the cenſures of the church. St. *Paul*, therefore, in his firſt epiſtle, ſeverely chides them for this neglect of diſcipline, and commands them, "in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, when they were gathered together, to deliver ſuch one, whoever he was, to Satan, for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that his Spirit might be ſaved in the day of the LORD;" that is, they ſhould ſolemnly excommunicate him; which was then commonly attended with ſome bodily diſeaſe. The *Corinthians*, being obedient to the Apoſtle, as dear children, no ſooner received this reproof, but they ſubmitted to it, and caſt the offending party out of the church. But whilſt they were endeavouring to amend one fault, they unhappily ran into another; and as they formerly had been too mild and remiſs, ſo now they behaved towards him with too much ſeverity and reſentment. The Apoſtle, therefore, in this chapter, reproves this, and tells them, that "ſufficient to the

offender's ſhame, was the puniſhment which had been inflicted of many:" that he had now ſuffered enough; and that, therefore, leſt he ſhould be tempted to ſay with *Cain*, "My puniſhment is greater than I can bear;" or to uſe the Apoſtle's own words, "Leſt he ſhould be ſwallowed up with overmuch ſorrow;" they ought, now he had given proof of his repentance, to forgive him, to confirm their love towards him, and ſo reſtore him in the ſpirit of meekneſs; "Leſt Satan, (to whoſe buffetings he was now given, by tempting him to deſpair) ſhould get an advantage over us:" and ſo, by repreſenting you as mercileſs and cruel, cauſe that holy name to be blaſphemed, by which you are called; "for we are not ignorant of his devices:" we know very well how many ſubtle ways he has to draw aſide and beguile unguarded unthinking men.

Thus then, ſtand the words in relation to the context; but as Satan has many devices, and as his quiver is full of other poiſonous darts, beſides thoſe which he ſhoots at us to drive us to deſpair, I ſhall, in the following diſcourſe,

Firſt, Briefly obſerve who we are to underſtand by Satan. And,

Secondly, Point out to you, what are the chief devices he generally makes uſe of, to draw off converts from CHRIST, and alſo preſcribe ſome remedies againſt them.

Firſt, Who are we to underſtand by Satan?

The word *Satan*, in its original ſignification, means an adverſary; and in its general acceptation, is made uſe of, to point out to us the chief of the devils, who, for ſtriving to be as GOD, was caſt down from heaven, and is now permitted, "with the reſt of his ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places, to walk up and down, ſeeking whom he may devour." We hear of him immediately after the creation, when in the ſhape of a ſerpent, he lay in wait to deceive our firſt parents. He is called Satan, in the book of *Job*, where we are told, that "when

"when the ſons of GOD came to preſent themſelves before the LORD, Satan alſo came amongſt them." As the ſcripture alſo ſpeaketh in the book of *Chronicles*; "and Satan moved *David* to number the people." In the New Teſtament he goes under different denominations; ſometimes he is called the *evil One*; becauſe he is evil in himſelf, and tempts us to evil. Sometimes, "the Prince of the power of the air;" and, "the Spirit that now ruleth in the children of diſobedience;" becauſe he reſides chiefly in the air, and through the whole world: and all that are not born of GOD, are ſaid to lie in him.

He is an enemy to GOD and goodneſs; he is a hater of all truth: Why elſe did he ſlander GOD in paradiſe? Why did he tell *Eve*, "You ſhall not ſurely die?" And why did he promiſe to give all the kingdoms of the world, and the glories of them, to JESUS CHRIST, if he would fall down and worſhip him?

He is full of malice, envy, and revenge: For what other motives could induce him to moleſt innocent man in paradiſe? And why is he ſtill ſo reſtleſs in his attempts to deſtroy us, who have done him no wrong?

He is a being of great *power*, as appears in his being able to act on the imagination of our bleſſed LORD, ſo as to repreſent to him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glories of them, in a moment of time. As alſo in carrying his ſacred body through the air up to a pinacle of the temple; and his driving a herd of ſwine ſo furiouſly into the deep. Nay, ſo great is his might, that, I doubt not, was GOD to let him uſe his full ſtrength, but he could turn the earth upſide down, or pull the ſun from its orb.

But what he is moſt remarkable for is, his *ſubtlety*: for not having power given him from above, to take us by force, he is obliged to wait for opportunities to betray us, and to catch us by guile. He, therefore, made uſe of the ſerpent, which was ſubtle above all the beaſts of the field, in order to

tempt our firſt parents; and accordingly he is ſaid, in the New Teſtament, "To lie in wait to deceive;" and, in the words of the text, the Apoſtle ſays, "We are not ignorant of his devices;" thereby implying, that we are more in danger of being ſeduced by his policy, than over-borne by his power.

From this ſhort deſcription of Satan, we may eaſily judge whoſe children they are, who love to make a lie, who ſpeak evil of, and ſlander their neighbour, and whoſe hearts are full of pride, ſubtlety, malice, envy, revenge, and all uncharitableneſs. Surely they have Satan for their father: for the tempers of Satan they know, and the works of Satan they do. But were they to ſee either themſelves, or Satan as he is, they could not but be terrified at their own likeneſs, and abhor themſelves in duſt and aſhes.

But, the juſtice of GOD in ſuffering us to be tempted, is vindicated from the following conſiderations: That we are here in a ſtate of diſorder; That he has promiſed not to ſuffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear; and not only ſo, but to him that overcometh he will give a crown of life.

The holy angels themſelves, it ſhould ſeem, were once put to a trial whether they would be faithful or not. The firſt *Adam* was tempted, even in paradiſe. And JESUS CHRIST, that ſecond *Adam*, though he was a ſon, yet was carried, as our repreſentative, by the Holy Spirit, into the wilderneſs, to be tempted of the devil. And there is not one ſingle ſaint in paradiſe, amongſt the goodly fellowſhip of the prophets, the glorious company of the apoſtles, the noble army of martyrs, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, who, when on earth, was not aſſaulted by the fiery darts of that wicked one, the devil.

What then has been the common lot of all GOD's children, and of the angels, nay, of the eternal Son of GOD himſelf, we muſt not think to be exempted from: No, it is ſufficient if we are made perfect through temptations, as they were. And, therefore,

therefore, ſince we cannot but be tempted, unleſs we could unmake human nature, inſtead of repining at our condition, we ſhould rather be enquiring, at what time of our lives Satan moſt violently aſſaults us? And what thoſe devices are, which he commonly makes uſe of, in order to "get an advantage over us?"

As to the firſt queſtion, what time of life? I anſwer, we muſt expect to be tempted by him, in ſome degree or other, all our lives long.—For this life being a continual warfare, we muſt never expect to have reſt from our ſpiritual adverſary the devil, or to ſay, our combat with him is finiſhed, 'till, with our bleſſed maſter, we bow down our heads, and give up the ghoſt.

But ſince the time of our converſion, or firſt entring upon the ſpiritual life, is the moſt critical time at which he, for the moſt part, violently beſets us, as well knowing, if he can prevent our ſetting out, he can lead us captive at his will; and ſince the wiſe ſon of *Sirach* particularly warns us, when we are going to ſerve the LORD, to prepare our ſouls for temptation, I ſhall, in anſwer to the other queſtion, paſs on to the

Second general thing propoſed; and point out thoſe devices, which Satan generally makes uſe of at our firſt converſion, in order to get an advantage over us.

But let me obſerve to you, that whatſoever ſhall be delivered in the following diſcourſe is only deſigned for ſuch as have actually entered upon the divine life; and not for carnal almoſt Chriſtians, who have the form of godlineſs, but never yet felt the power of it in their hearts. This being premiſed, The

Firſt device I ſhall mention, which Satan makes uſe of, is, *to drive us to deſpair.*

When GOD the Father awakens a ſinner by the terrors of the law, and by his Holy Spirit convinceth him of ſin, in order

to lead him to CHRIST, and ſhew him the neceſſity of a Redeemer; then Satan generally ſtrikes in, and aggravates thoſe convictions to ſuch a degree, as to make the ſinner doubt of finding mercy thro' the Mediator.

Thus, in all his temptations of the Holy JESUS, he chiefly aimed to make him queſtion, whether he was the Son of GOD? "If thou be the Son of GOD," do ſo and ſo. With many ſuch deſponding thoughts, no doubt, he filled the heart of the great St. *Paul*, when he continued three days, neither eating bread nor drinking water; and therefore he ſpeaks by experience, when he ſays, in the words of the text, "We are not ignorant of his devices," that he would endeavour to drive the inceſtuous perſon to deſpair.

But let not any of you be influenced by him, to deſpair of finding mercy. For it is not the greatneſs or number of our crimes, but impenitence and unbelief, that will prove our ruin; No, were our ſins more in number than the hairs of our head, or of a deeper die than the brighteſt ſcarlet; yet the merits of the death of JESUS CHRIST are infinitely greater, and faith in his blood ſhall make them white as ſnow.

Anſwer always, therefore, his deſpairing ſuggeſtions, as your BLESSED LORD did, with an "It is written." Tell him, you know that your Redeemer liveth, ever to make interceſſion for you; that the LORD hath received from him double for all your crimes: And tho' you have ſinned much, that is no reaſon why you ſhould deſpair, but only why you ſhould love much, having ſo much forgiven. A

Second device that Satan generally makes uſe of, to get an advantage over young converts, is, to tempt them to *preſume*, or to think more highly of themſelves than they ought to think.

When a perſon has for ſome little time taſted the good word of life, and felt the powers of the world to come, he is commonly (as indeed well he may) moſt highly tranſported with that ſudden change he finds in himſelf. But then, Satan

Satan will not be wanting, at ſuch a time, to puff him up with a high conceit of his own attainments, as if he was ſome great perſon; and will tempt him to ſet at nought his brethren, as though he was holier than they.

Take heed therefore, and let us beware of this device of our ſpiritual adverſary; for as before honour is humility, ſo a haughty ſpirit generally goes before a fall; and GOD is obliged, when under ſuch circumſtances, to ſend us ſome humbling viſitation, or permit us to fall, as he did *Peter*, into ſome grievous ſin, that we may learn not to be too high minded.

To check therefore all ſuggeſtions to ſpiritual pride, let us conſider, that we did not apprehend CHRIST, but were apprehended of him. That we have nothing but what we have received. That the free grace of GOD has alone made the difference between us and others; and, was GOD to leave us to the deceitfulneſs of our own hearts but one moment, we ſhould become weak and wicked, like other men. We ſhould farther conſider, that being proud of grace, is the moſt ready way to loſe it. "For GOD reſiſteth the proud, and giveth more grace only to the humble." And were we endowed with the perfections of the ſeraphim; yet if we were proud of thoſe perfections, they would but render us more accompliſhed devils. Above all, we ſhould pray earneſtly to Almighty GOD, that we may learn of JESUS CHRIST, to be lowly in heart. That his grace, through the ſubtlety and deceivableneſs of Satan, may not be our poiſon. But that we may always think ſoberly of ourſelves, as we ought to think. A

Third device I ſhall mention, which Satan generally makes uſe of, "to get an advantage over us," is to tempt us to *uneaſineſs*, and to have *hard thoughts of* GOD, when we are dead and barren in prayer.

Though this is a term not underſtood by the natural man, yet, whoſoever there are amongſt you, who have paſſed through

the pangs of the *new birth*, they know full well what I mean, when I talk of deadneſs and dryneſs in prayer. And, I doubt not, but many of you, amongſt whom I am now preaching the kingdom of GOD, are at this very time labouring under it.

For, when perſons are firſt awakened to the divine life, becauſe grace is weak and nature ſtrong, GOD is often pleaſed to vouchſafe them ſome extraordinary illuminations of his Holy Spirit; but when they are grown to be more perfect men in CHRIST, then he frequently ſeems to leave them to themſelves; and not only ſo, but permits a horrible deadneſs and dread to overwhelm them; at which times Satan will not be wanting to vex and tempt them to impatience, to the great diſcomfort of their ſouls.

But be not afraid; for this is no more than your bleſſed Redeemer, that ſpotleſs Lamb of GOD, has undergone before you: witneſs his bitter agony in the garden, when his ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death. When he ſweat great drops of blood, falling on the ground; when the ſenſe of the Divinity was drawn from him; and Satan, in all probability, was permitted to ſet all his terrors in array before him.

Rejoice, therefore, my brethren, when you fall into the like circumſtances; as knowing, that you are therein partakers of the ſufferings of JESUS CHRIST. Conſider, that it is neceſſary ſuch inward trials ſhould come, to wean us from the immoderate love of ſenſible devotion, and teach us to follow CHRIST, not merely for his loaves, but out of a principle of love and obedience. In patience, therefore, poſſeſs your ſouls, and be not terrified by Satan's ſuggeſtions. Still perſevere in ſeeking JESUS in the uſe of means, though it be ſorrowing; and though through barrenneſs of ſoul, you may go mourning all the day long. Conſider that the ſpouſe is with you, though behind the curtain; as he was with *Mary*, at the ſepulchre, though ſhe knew it not. That he has withdrawn but for a little while, to make his next viſit more welcome. That though he may now ſeem to frown and look back on you, as he

he did on the *Syrophenician* woman; yet if you, like her, or blind *Bartimeus*, cry out ſo much the more earneſtly, "JESUS, thou Son of *David*, have mercy on us;" he will be made known unto you again, either in the temple, by breaking of bread, or ſome other way.

But amongſt all the devices that Satan makes uſe of, "to get an advantage over us," there is none in which he is more ſucceſsful, or by which he grieves the children of GOD worſe, than a

Fourth device I am going to mention, his troubling you with *blaſphemous*, *profane*, *unbelieving thoughts*; and ſometimes to ſuch a degree, that they are as tormenting as the rack.

Some indeed are apt to impute all ſuch evil thoughts to a diſorder of body. But thoſe who know any thing of the ſpiritual life, can inform you, with greater certainty, that for the generality, they proceed from that wicked one, the devil; who, no doubt, has power given him from above, as well now as formerly, to diſorder the body, as he did *Job*'s, that he may, with the more ſecrecy and ſucceſs, work upon, ruffle and torment the ſoul.

You that have felt his fiery darts, can ſubſcribe to the truth of this, and by fatal experience can tell, how often he has bid you, "curſe GOD and die," and darted into your thoughts a thouſand blaſphemous ſuggeſtions, even in your moſt ſecret and ſolemn retirements; the bare looking back on which makes your very hearts to tremble.

I appeal to your own conſciencies; Have not ſome of you, when you have been lifting up holy hands in prayer, been peſtered with ſuch a crowd of the moſt horrid inſinuations, that you have been often tempted to riſe off from your knees, and been made to believe your prayers were an abomination to the LORD? Nay, when, with the reſt of your chriſtian brethren, you have crouded round the holy table, and taken the ſacred ſymbols of CHRIST's moſt bleſſed body and blood into

into your hands, inſtead of remembring the death of your Saviour, have you not been employed in driving out evil thoughts, as *Abraham* was in driving away the birds, that came to devour his ſacrifice; and thereby have been terrified, leſt you have eat and drank your own damnation?

But marvel not, as though ſome ſtrange thing happened unto you; for this has been the common lot of all GOD's children. We read, even in *Job*'s time, "That when the ſons of GOD came to appear before their Maker, (at public worſhip) Satan alſo came amongſt them," to diſturb their devotions.

And think not that GOD is angry with you for theſe diſtracting, though ever ſo blaſphemous thoughts: No, he knows it is not you, but Satan working in you; and therefore, notwithſtanding he may be diſpleaſed with, and certainly will puniſh him; yet he will both pity and reward you. And though it be difficult to make perſons in your circumſtances to believe ſo; yet I doubt not but you are more acceptable to GOD, when performing your holy duties in the midſt of ſuch involuntary diſtractions, than when you are wrapped up by devotion, as it were, into the third heavens; for you are then ſuffering, as well as doing the will of GOD at the ſame time; and, like *Nehemiah*'s ſervants at the building of the temple, are holding a trowel in one hand, and a ſword in the other. Be not driven from the uſe of any ordinance whatever, on account of thoſe abominable ſuggeſtions; for then you let Satan get his deſired advantage over you; it being his chief deſign, by theſe thoughts, to make you fall out with the means of grace; and to tempt you to believe, you do not pleaſe GOD, for no other reaſon, than becauſe you do not pleaſe yourſelves. Rather perſevere in the uſe of the holy communion eſpecially, and all other means whatever; and when theſe temptations have wrought that reſignation in you, for which they were permitted, GOD will viſit you with freſh tokens of his love, as he met *Abraham*, when he returned from the ſlaughter of the five kings; and will ſend an angel from heaven, as he did to his Son, on purpoſe to ſtrengthen you.

Hitherto we have only obſerved ſuch devices as Satan makes uſe of immediately by himſelf; but there is a

Fifth I ſhall mention, which is not the leaſt, tempting us by our *carnal friends* and *relations*.

This is one of the moſt common, as well as moſt artful devices he makes uſe of, to draw young converts from GOD; for when he cannot prevail over them by himſelf, he will try what he can do by the influence and mediation of others.

Thus he tempted *Eve*, that ſhe might tempt *Adam*. Thus he ſtirred up *Job*'s wife, to bid him "Curſe GOD and die." And thus he made uſe of *Peter*'s tongue, to perſuade our bleſſed LORD "to ſpare himſelf," and thereby decline thoſe ſufferings, by which alone we could be preſerved from ſuffering the vengeance of eternal fire. And thus, in theſe laſt days, he often ſtirs up our moſt powerful friends and deareſt intimates, to diſſuade us from going in that narrow way, which alone leadeth unto life eternal.

But our bleſſed LORD has furniſhed us with a ſufficient anſwer to all ſuch ſuggeſtions. "Get you behind me, my adverſaries;" for otherwiſe they will be an offence unto you; and the only reaſon why they give ſuch advice is, becauſe they "ſavour not the things that be of GOD, but the things that be of men."

Whoever, therefore, among you are reſolved to ſerve the LORD, prepare your ſouls for many ſuch temptations as theſe; for it is neceſſary that ſuch offences ſhould come, to try your ſincerity, to teach us to ceaſe from man, and to ſee if we will forſake all to follow CHRIST.

Indeed our moderniſers of chriſtianity would perſuade us, that the goſpel was calculated only for about two hundred years; and that now there is no need of hating father and mother,

mother, or of being perſecuted for the ſake of CHRIST and his goſpel.

But ſuch perſons err, not knowing the ſcriptures, and the power of godlineſs in their hearts; for whoſoever receives the love of GOD in the truth of it, will find, that CHRIST came to ſend not peace, but a ſword upon earth, as much now as ever. That the father-in-law ſhall be againſt the daughter-in-law, in theſe latter, as well as in the primitive times; and that if we will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, we muſt, as then, ſo now, from carnal friends and relations, ſuffer perſecution. But the devil hath a

Sixth device, which is as dangerous as any of the former, by *not tempting us at all*, or rather, by *withdrawing himſelf for a while*, in order to come upon us at an hour when we think not of it.

Thus it is ſaid, that he left JESUS CHRIST only for a ſeaſon; and our bleſſed LORD has bid us to watch and pray always, that we enter not into temptation; thereby implying, that Satan, whether we think of it or not, is always ſeeking how he may devour us.

If we would therefore behave like good ſoldiers of JESUS CHRIST, we muſt be always upon our guard, and never pretend to lay down our ſpiritual weapons of prayer and watching, till our warfare is accompliſhed by death; for if we do, our ſpiritual Amalek will quickly prevail againſt us. What if he has left us? it is only for a ſeaſon; yet a little while, and, like a roaring lion, with double fury, he will break out upon us again. So great a coward as the devil is, he ſeldom leaves us at the firſt onſet. As he followed our bleſſed LORD with one temptation after another, ſo will he treat his ſervants. And the reaſon why he does not renew his attacks, is ſometimes, becauſe GOD knows we are yet weak and unable to bear them, ſometimes, becauſe our grand adverſary thinks to beſet us at a more convenient ſeaſon.

Watch carefully therefore over thy heart, O chriſtian; and whenever thou perceiveſt thyſelf to be falling into a ſpiritual ſlumber, ſay to it, as CHRIST to his diſciples, "Ariſe (my ſoul) why ſleepeſt thou?" Awake, awake; put on ſtrength, watch and pray, or otherwiſe the *Philiſtines* will be upon thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldſt not. Alas! Is this life a time to lie down and ſlumber in? Ariſe, and call upon thy GOD; thy ſpiritual enemy is not dead, but lurketh in ſome ſecret place, ſeeking a convenient opportunity how he may betray thee. If thou ceaſeſt to ſtrive with him, thou ceaſeſt to be a friend of GOD; thou ceaſeſt to go in that narrow way which leadeth unto life.

Thus have I endeavoured to point out to you ſome of thoſe devices, that Satan generally makes uſe of "to get an advantage over us;" many others there are, no doubt, which he often uſes.

But theſe, on account of my youth and want of experience, I cannot yet appriſe you of; they who have been liſted for many years in their maſter's ſervice, and fought under his banner againſt our ſpiritual Amalek, are able to diſcover more of his artifices; and, being tempted in all things, like unto their brethren, can, in all things, adviſe and ſuccour thoſe that are tempted.

In the mean while, let me exhort my young fellow-ſoldiers, who, like myſelf, are but juſt entring the field, and for whoſe ſake this was written, not to be diſcouraged at the fiery trial wherewith they muſt be tried, if they would be found faithful ſervants of JESUS CHRIST. You ſee, my dearly beloved brethren, by what has been delivered, that our way through the wilderneſs of this world to the heavenly *Canaan*, is beſet with thorns, and that there are ſons of Anak to be grappled with, ere you can poſſeſs the promiſed land. But let not theſe, like ſo many falſe ſpies, diſcourage you from going up to fight the LORD's battles, but ſay with *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, "Nay, but we will go up, for we are able to conquer them." JESUS CHRIST, that great captain of our ſalvation, has in our

our ſtead, and as our repreſentative, baffled the grand enemy of mankind, and we have nothing to do, but manfully to fight under his banner, and to go on from conquering to conquer. Our glory does not conſiſt in being exempted from, but in enduring temptations. "Bleſſed is the man, (ſays the apoſtle) that endureth temptation;" and again, "Brethren, count it all joy, when you fall into divers temptations:" And in that perfect form our bleſſed LORD has prefcribed to us, we are taught to pray, not ſo much to be delivered from all temptation, as "from the evil" of it. Whilſt we are on this ſide eternity, it muſt needs be that temptations come; and, no doubt, "Satan has deſired to have all of us, to ſift us as wheat." But wherefore ſhould we fear? For he that is for us, is by far more powerful, than all that are againſt us. JESUS CHRIST, our great High-prieſt, is exalted to the right hand of GOD, and there ſitteth to make interceſſion for us, that our faith fail not.

Since then CHRIST is praying, whom ſhould we fear? And ſince he has promiſed to make us more than conquerors, of whom ſhould we be afraid? No, though an hoſt of devils are ſet in array againſt us, let us not be afraid; though there ſhould riſe up the hotteſt perſecution againſt us, yet let us put our truſt in GOD. What though Satan, and the reſt of his apoſtate ſpirits, are powerful, when compared with us; yet, if put in competition with the Almighty, they are as weak as the meaneſt worms. GOD has them all reſerved in chains of darkneſs unto the judgment of the great day. So far as he permits them, they ſhall go, but no farther; and where he pleaſes, there ſhall their proud malicious deſigns be ſtayed. We read in the goſpel, that though a legion of them poſſeſſed one man, yet they could not deſtroy him; nor could they ſo much as enter into a ſwine, without firſt having leave given them from above. It is true, we often find they foil us, when we are aſſaulted by them; but let us be ſtrong, and very couragious; for, though they bruiſe our heels, we ſhall, at length, bruiſe their heads. Yet a little while, and he that ſhall come, will come; and then we ſhall ſee all our ſpiritual enemies put under our feet. What if they do come out againſt us, like ſo

man

many great Goliahs; yet, if we can go forth, as the ſtripling *David*, in the name and ſtrength of the LORD of hoſts, we may ſay, O Satan, where is thy power? O fallen ſpirits, where is your victory?

Once more therefore, and to conclude; let us be ſtrong, and very couragious, and let us put on the whole armour of GOD, that we may be able to ſtand againſt the fiery darts of the wicked one. Let us renounce ourſelves, and the world, and then we ſhall take away the armour in which he truſteth, and he will find nothing in us for his temptations to work upon. We ſhall then prevent his malicious deſigns; and being willing to ſuffer ourſelves, ſhall need leſs ſufferings to be ſent us from above. Let us have our loins girt about with truth; and for an helmet, the hope of ſalvation; "praying always with all manner of ſupplication." Above all things, "Let us take the ſword of the ſpirit, which is the word of GOD," and "the ſhield of faith," looking always to JESUS, the author and finiſher of our faith, who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is now ſat down at the right hand of GOD.

To which happy place, may GOD of his infinite mercy tranſlate us all, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, three perſons and one eternal GOD, be all honour and glory, now and for evermore. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON XLIX.

On Regeneration.

2 COR. v. 17.

If any man be in CHRIST, *he is a new creature.*

THE doctrine of our regeneration, or new birth in CHRIST JESUS, though one of the moſt fundamental doctrines of our holy religion; though ſo plainly and often preſſed on us in ſacred writ, "that he who runs may read;" nay though it is the very hinge on which the ſalvation of each of us turns, and a point too in which all ſincere chriſtians, of every denomination, agree; yet it is ſo ſeldom conſidered, and ſo little experimentally underſtood by the generality of profeſſors, that were we to judge of the truth of it, by the experience of moſt who call themſelves chriſtians, we ſhould be apt to imagine they had "not ſo much as heard" whether there be any ſuch thing as regeneration or not. It is true, men for the moſt part are orthodox in the common articles of their creed; they believe "there is but one GOD, and one Mediator between GOD and men, even the man CHRIST JESUS;" and that there is no other name given under heaven, whereby they can be ſaved, beſides his: But then tell them, they muſt be regenerated, they muſt be born again, they muſt be renewed in the very ſpirit, in the inmoſt faculties of their minds, ere they can truly call CHRIST, "Lord, Lord," or have an evidence that they have any ſhare in the merits of his precious blood; and they are ready to cry out with *Nicodemus*, "How can theſe things be?" Or with the *Athenians*, on another occaſion, "What will this babler ſay? he ſeemeth to be a ſetter-forth of ſtrange doctrines:"

doctrines;" becauſe we preach unto them CHRIST, and the new-birth.

That I may therefore contribute my mite towards curing the fatal miſtake of ſuch perſons, who would thus put aſunder what GOD has inſeparably joined together, and vainly think they are juſtified by CHRIST, or have their ſins forgiven, and his perfect obedience imputed to them, when they are not ſanctified, have not their natures changed, and made holy, I ſhall beg leave to enlarge on the words of the text in the following manner:

Firſt, I ſhall endeavour to explain what is meant by being in CHRIST: "If any man be in CHRIST."

Secondly, What we are to underſtand by being a new creature: "If any man be in CHRIST he is a new creature."

Thirdly, I ſhall produce ſome arguments to make good the apoſtle's aſſertion. And

Fourthly, I ſhall draw ſome inferences from what may be delivered, and then conclude with a word or two of exhortation.

Firſt, I am to endeavour to explain what is meant by this expreſſion in the text, "If any man be in CHRIST."

Now a perſon may be ſaid to be in CHRIST two ways.

Firſt, Only by an outward profeſſion. And in this ſenſe, every one that is called a chriſtian, or baptized into CHRIST's church, may be ſaid to be in CHRIST. But that this is not the ſole meaning of the apoſtle's phraſe before us, is evident, becauſe then, every one that names the name of CHRIST, or is baptized into his viſible church, would be a new creature. Which is notoriouſly falſe, it being too plain, beyond all contradiction, that comparatively but few of thoſe that are "born of water," are "born of the Spirit" likewiſe; to uſe

another ſpiritual way of ſpeaking, many are baptized with water, which were never baptized with the Holy Ghoſt.

To be in CHRIST therefore, in the full import of the word, muſt certainly mean ſomething more than a bare outward profeſſion, or being called after his name. For, as this ſame apoſtle tells us, "All are not *Iſraelites* that are of *Iſrael*," ſo when applied to chriſtianity, all are not real chriſtians that are nominally ſuch. Nay, this is ſo far from being the caſe, that our bleſſed LORD himſelf informs us, that many who have propheſied or preached in his name, and in his name caſt out devils, and done many wonderful works, ſhall notwithſtanding be diſmiſſed at the laſt day, with "depart from me, I know you not, ye workers of iniquity."

It remains therefore, that this expreſſion, "if any man be in CHRIST," muſt be underſtood in a

Second and cloſer ſignification, to be *in him* ſo as to partake of the benefits of his ſufferings. To be in him not only by an outward profeſſion, but by an inward change and purity of heart, and cohabitation of his holy ſpirit. To be in him, ſo as to be myſtically united to him by a true and lively faith, and thereby to receive ſpiritual virtue from him, as the members of the natural body do from the head, or the branches from the vine. To be in him in ſuch a manner as the apoſtle, ſpeaking of himſelf, acquaints us he knew a perſon was, "I knew a man in CHRIST," a true chriſtian; or, as he himſelf deſires to be in CHRIST, when he wiſhes, in his epiſtle to the *Philippians*, that he might be found in him.

This is undoubtedly the proper meaning of the apoſtle's expreſſion in the words of the text; ſo that what he ſays in his epiſtle to the *Romans* about circumciſion, may very well be applied to the preſent ſubject; that he is not a real chriſtian who is only one outwardly; nor is that true baptiſm, which is only outward in the fleſh. But he is a true chriſtian, who is one inwardly, whoſe baptiſm is that of the heart, in the ſpirit, and not merely in the water, whoſe praiſe is

not of man but of GOD. Or, as he ſpeaketh in another place, "Neither circumciſion nor uncircumciſion availeth any thing (of itſelf) but a new creature." Which amounts to what he here declares in the verſe now under conſideration, that if any man be truly and properly in CHRIST, he is a new creature. Which brings me to ſhew,

Secondly, What we are to underſtand by being a *new creature*.

And here it is evident at the firſt view, that this expreſſion is not to be ſo explained as though there was a phyſical change required to be made in us; or as though we were to be reduced to our primitive nothings, and then created and formed again. For, ſuppoſing we were, as *Nicodemus* ignorantly imagined, to enter a "ſecond time into our mother's womb, and be born," alas! what would it contribute towards rendering us ſpiritually new creatures? Since "that which was born of the fleſh would be fleſh ſtill;" we ſhould be the ſame carnal perſons as ever, being derived from carnal parents, and conſequently receiving the ſeeds of all manner of ſin and corruption from them. No, it only means, that we muſt be ſo altered as to the qualities and tempers of our minds, that we muſt entirely forget what manner of perſons we once were. As it may be ſaid of a piece of gold, that was once in the ore, after it has been cleanſed, purified and poliſhed, that it is a new piece of gold; as it may be ſaid of a bright glaſs that has been covered over with filth, when it is wiped, and ſo become tranſparent and clear, that it is a new glaſs: Or, as it might be ſaid of *Naaman*, when he recovered of his leproſy, and his fleſh returned unto him like the fleſh of a young child, that he was a new man; ſo our ſouls, though ſtill the ſame as to eſſence, yet are ſo purged, purified and cleanſed from their natural droſs, filth and leproſy, by the bleſſed influences of the Holy Spirit, that they may be properly ſaid to be made anew.

How this glorious change is wrought in the ſoul, cannot eaſily be explained: For no one knows the ways of the Spirit, ſave the Spirit of GOD himſelf. Not that this ought to be

any argument againſt this doctrine; for, as our bleſſed LORD obſerved to *Nicodemus*, when he was diſcourſing on this very ſubject, "The wind bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but knoweſt not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth;" and if we are told of natural things, and we underſtand them not, how much leſs ought we to wonder, if we cannot immediately account for the inviſible workings of the Holy Spirit? The truth of the matter is this: the doctrine of our regeneration, or new birth in CHRIST JESUS, is hard to be underſtood by the natural man. But that there is really ſuch a thing, and that each of us muſt be ſpiritually born again, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew under my

Third general head, in which I was to produce ſome arguments to make good the apoſtle's aſſertion.

And here one would think it ſufficient to affirm,

Firſt, That GOD himſelf, in his holy word, hath told us ſo. Many texts might be produced out of the Old Teſtament to prove this point, and indeed, one would wonder how *Nicodemus*, who was a teacher in *Iſrael*, and who was therefore to inſtruct the people in the ſpiritual meaning of the law, ſhould be ſo ignorant of this grand article, as we find he really was, by his aſking our bleſſed LORD, when he was preſſing on him this topic, How can theſe things be? Surely, he could not forget how often the Pſalmiſt had begged of GOD, to make him "a new heart," and "to renew a right ſpirit within him;" as likewiſe, how frequently the prophets had warned the people to make them "new hearts," and new minds, and ſo turn unto the LORD their GOD. But not to mention theſe and ſuch like texts out of the Old Teſtament, this doctrine is ſo often and plainly repeated in the New, that, as I obſerved before, he who runs may read. For what ſays the great Prophet and Inſtructor of the world himſelf: "Except a man (every one that is naturally the offſpring of *Adam*) be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD." And leſt we ſhould

be apt to ſlight this aſſertion, and *Nicodemus*-like, reject the doctrine, becauſe we cannot immediately explain "How this thing can be;" our bleſſed Maſter therefore affirms it, as it were, by an oath, "Verily, verily, I ſay unto you," or, as it may be read, I the Amen; I, who am truth itſelf, ſay unto you, that it is the unalterable appointment of my heavenly Father, that "unleſs a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of GOD."

Agreeable to this, are thoſe many paſſages we meet with in the epiſtles, where we are commanded to be "renewed in the Spirit," or, which was before explained, in the inmoſt faculties of our minds; to "put off the Old Man, which is corrupt; and to put on the New Man, which is created after GOD, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs;" that "old things muſt paſs away, and that all things muſt become new;" that we are to be "ſaved by the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt." Or, methinks, was there no other paſſage to be produced beſides the words of the text, it would be full enough, ſince the apoſtle therein poſitively affirms, that "If any man be in CHRIST, he is a *new creature*."

Now, what can be underſtood by all theſe different terms of being *born again*, of *putting off the Old Man*, and *putting on the New*, of being *renewed in the ſpirit of our minds*, and becoming *new creatures*; but that chriſtianity requires a thorough, real inward change of heart? Do we think theſe, and ſuch-like forms of ſpeaking, are mere metaphors, words of a bare ſound, without any real ſolid ſignification? Indeed, it is to be feared, ſome men would have them interpreted ſo; but alas! unhappy men! they are not to be envied in their metaphorical interpretation: it will be well, if they do not interpret themſelves out of their ſalvation.

Multitudes of other texts might be produced to confirm this ſame truth; but thoſe already quoted are ſo plain and convincing, that one would imagine no one ſhould deny it; were we not told, there are ſome, "who having eyes, ſee not,

not, and ears, hear not, and that will not underſtand with their hearts, or hear with their ears, leſt they ſhould be converted, and CHRIST ſhould heal them."

But I proceed to a

Second argument; and that ſhall be taken from the purity of GOD, and the preſent corrupt and polluted ſtate of man.

GOD is deſcribed in holy ſcripture (and I ſpeak to thoſe who profeſs to know the ſcripture) as a Spirit; as a being of ſuch infinite ſanctity, as to be of "purer eyes than to behold iniquity;" as to be ſo tranſcendently holy, that it is ſaid "the very heavens are not clean in his ſight; and the angels themſelves he chargeth with folly." On the other hand, man is deſcribed (and every regenerate perſon will find it true by his own experience) as a creature altogether "conceived and born in ſin;" as having "no good thing dwelling in him;" as being "carnal, ſold under ſin;" nay, as having "a mind which is at enmity with GOD," and ſuch-like. And ſince there is ſuch an infinite diſparity, can any one conceive how a filthy, corrupted, polluted wretch can dwell with an infinitely pure and holy GOD, before he is changed, and rendered, in ſome meaſure, like him? Can he, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, dwell with it? Can he, in whoſe ſight the heavens are not clean, delight to dwell with uncleanneſs itſelf? No, we might as well ſuppoſe light to have communion with darkneſs, or CHRIST to have concord with *Belial*. But I paſs on to a

Third argument, which ſhall be founded on the conſideration of the nature of that happineſs GOD has prepared for thoſe that unfeignedly love him.

To enter indeed on a minute and particular deſcription of heaven, would be vain and preſumptuous, ſince we are told that "eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things that are there prepared" for the ſincere followers of the holy JESUS,

even in this life, much leſs in that which is to come. However, this we may venture to affirm in general, that as GOD is a Spirit, ſo the happineſs he has laid up for his people is ſpiritual likewiſe; and conſequently, unleſs our carnal minds are changed, and ſpiritualized, we can never be made meet to partake of that inheritance with the ſaints in light.

It is true, we may flatter ourſelves, that, ſuppoſing we continue in our natural corrupt eſtate, and carry all our luſts along with us, we ſhould, notwithſtanding, reliſh heaven, was GOD to admit us therein. And ſo we might, was it a *Mahometan* paradiſe, wherein we were to take our full ſwing in ſenſual delights. But ſince its joys are only ſpiritual, and no unclean thing can poſſibly enter thoſe bleſſed manſions, there is an abſolute neceſſity of our being changed, and undergoing a total renovation of our depraved natures, before we can have any taſte or reliſh of thoſe heavenly pleaſures.

It is, doubtleſs, for this reaſon, that the apoſtle declares it to be the irrevocable decreee of the Almighty, that "without holineſs, (without being made pure by regeneration, and having the image of GOD thereby reinſtamped upon the ſoul) no man ſhall ſee the LORD." And it is very obſervable, that our divine Maſter, in the famous paſſage before referred to, concerning the abſolute neceſſity of regeneration, does not ſay, Unleſs a man be born again, he *ſhall not*, but "unleſs a man be born again, he *cannot* enter into the kingdom of GOD." It is founded in the very nature of things, that unleſs we have diſpoſitions wrought in us ſuitable to the objects that are to entertain us, we can take no manner of complacency or ſatisfaction in them. For inſtance; what delight can the moſt harmonious muſic afford to a deaf, or what pleaſure can the moſt excellent picture give to a blind man? Can a taſteleſs palate reliſh the richeſt dainties, or a filthy ſwine be pleaſed with the fineſt garden of flowers? No: and what reaſon can be aſſigned for it? An anſwer is ready; becauſe they have neither of them any tempers of mind correſpondent or agreeable to what they are to be diverted with. And thus it is with the ſoul hereafter: for death makes no more alteration

ration in the ſoul, than as it inlarges its faculties, and makes it capable of receiving deeper impreſſions either of pleaſure or pain. If it delighted to converſe with GOD here, it will be tranſported with the ſight of his glorious Majeſty hereafter. If it was pleaſed with the communion of ſaints on earth, it will be infinitely more ſo with the communion and ſociety of holy angels, and the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect in heaven. But if the oppoſite of all this be true, we may aſſure ourſelves the ſoul could not be happy, was GOD himſelf to admit it (which he never will do) into the regions of the bleſſed. But it is time for me to haſten to the

Fourth argument, becauſe CHRIST's redemption will not be complete in us, unleſs we are new creatures.

If we reflect indeed on the firſt and chief end of our bleſſed LORD's coming, we ſhall find it was to be a propitiation for our ſins, to give his life a ranſom for many. But then, if the benefits of our dear Redeemer's death were to extend no farther than barely to procure forgiveneſs of our ſins, we ſhould have as little reaſon to rejoice in it, as a poor condemned criminal that is ready to periſh by ſome fatal diſeaſe, would have in receiving a pardon from his judge. For chriſtians would do well to conſider, that there is not only a legal hinderance to our happineſs, as we are breakers of GOD's law, but alſo a moral impurity in our natures, which renders us incapable of enjoying heaven (as hath been already proved) till ſome mighty change have been wrought in us. It is neceſſary therefore, in order to make CHRIST's redemption compleat, that we ſhould have a grant of GOD's holy Spirit to change our natures, and ſo prepare us for the enjoyment of that happineſs our Saviour has purchaſed by his precious blood.

Accordingly the holy ſcriptures inform us, that whom CHRIST juſtifies, or whoſe ſins he forgives, and to whom he imputes his perfect obedience, thoſe he alſo ſanctifies, purifies and cleanſes, and totally changeth their corrupted natures. As the ſcripture alſo ſpeaketh in another place, "CHRIST is

to

to us juſtification, ſanctification, and then redemption." But,

Fourthly, Proceed we now to the next general thing propoſed, to draw ſome inferences from what has been delivered. And,

Firſt, If he that is in CHRIST be a new creature, this may ſerve as a reproof for thoſe who reſt in a bare performance of outward duties, without perceiving any real inward change of heart.

We may obſerve a great many perſons to be very punctual in the regular returns of public and private prayer, as likewiſe of receiving the holy communion, and perhaps now and then too in keeping a faſt. But here is the misfortune, they reſt barely in the uſe of the means, and think all is over, when they have thus complied with thoſe ſacred inſtitutions; whereas, were they rightly informed, they would conſider, that all the inſtituted means of grace, as prayer, faſting, hearing and reading the word of GOD, receiving the bleſſed ſacrament, and ſuch-like, are no farther ſerviceable to us, than as they are found to make us inwardly better, and to carry on the ſpiritual life in the ſoul.

It is true, they are means; but then they are only means; they are part, but not the whole of religion: for if ſo, who more religious than the Phariſee? He faſted twice in the week, and gave tythes of all that he poſſeſſed, and yet was not juſtified, as our Saviour himſelf informs us, in the ſight of GOD.

You perhaps, like the Phariſee, may faſt often, and make long prayers; you may, with *Herod*, hear good ſermons gladly. But yet, if you continue vain and trifling, immoral or worldly-minded, and differ from the reſt of your neighbours barely in going to church, or in complying with ſome outward performances, are you better than they? No, in no wiſe; you are by far much worſe: for if you uſe them, and

at

at the ſame time abuſe them, you thereby encourage others to think there is nothing in them, and therefore muſt expect to receive the greater damnation. But,

Secondly, If he that is *in* CHRIST be a new creature, then this may check the groundleſs preſumption of another claſs of profeſſors, who reſt in the attainment of ſome moral virtues, and falſely imagine they are good chriſtians, if they are juſt in their dealings, temperate in their diet, and do no hurt or violence to any man.

But if this was all that is requiſite to make us chriſtians, why might not the heathens of old be good chriſtians, who were remarkable for theſe virtues? or St. *Paul* before his converſion, who tells us, that he lived in all good conſcience? but we find he renounces all dependance on works of this nature, and only deſires to be found in CHRIST, and to know the power of his reſurrection, or have an experimental proof of receiving the Holy Ghoſt, purchaſed for him by the death, and enſured and applied to him by the reſurrection of JESUS CHRIST.

The ſum of the matter is this: chriſtianity includes morality, as grace does reaſon; but if we are only mere Moraliſts, if we are not inwardly wrought upon, and changed by the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit, and our moral actions, proceed from a principle of a new nature, however we may call ourſelves chriſtians, we ſhall be found naked at the great day, and in the number of thoſe, who have neither CHRIST's righteouſneſs imputed to them for their juſtification in the ſight, nor holineſs enough in their ſouls as the conſequence of that, in order to make them meet for the enjoyment, of GOD. Nor,

Thirdly, Will this doctrine leſs condemn thoſe, who reſt in a partial amendment of themſelves, without experiencing a thorough, real, inward change of heart.

A little

A little acquaintance with the world will furniſh us with inſtances, of no ſmall number of perſons, who, perhaps, were before openly profane; but ſeeing the ill conſequences of their vices, and the many worldly inconveniencies it has reduced them to, on a ſudden, as it were, grow civilized; and thereupon flatter themſelves that they are very religious, becauſe they differ a little from their former ſelves, and are not ſo ſcandalouſly wicked as once they were: whereas, at the ſame time, they ſhall have ſome ſecret darling ſin or other, ſome beloved *Dalilah* or *Herodias*, which they will not part with; ſome hidden luſt, which they will not mortify; ſome vicious habit, which they will not take pains to root out. But wouldſt thou know, O vain man! whoever thou art, what the LORD thy GOD requires of thee? thou muſt be informed, that nothing ſhort of a thorough ſound converſion will fit thee for the kingdom of heaven. It is not enough to turn from profaneneſs to civility; but thou muſt turn from civility to godlineſs. Not only ſome, but "all things muſt become new" in thy ſoul. It will profit thee but little to do many things, if yet ſome one thing thou lackeſt. In ſhort, thou muſt not only be an almoſt, but altogether a new creature, or in vain thou boaſteth that thou art a chriſtian.

Fourthly, If he that is in CHRIST be a new creature, then this may be preſcribed as an infallible rule for every perſon of whatever denomination, age, degree or quality, to judge himſelf by; this being the only ſolid foundation, whereon we can build a well-grounded aſſurance of pardon, peace, and happineſs.

We may indeed depend on the broken reed of an external profeſſion; we may think we are good enough, if we lead ſuch ſober, honeſt, moral lives, as many heathens did. We may imagine we are in a ſafe condition, if we attend on the public offices of religion, and are conſtant in the duties of our cloſets. But unleſs all theſe tend to reform our lives, and change our hearts, and are only uſed as ſo many channels of divine grace; as I told you before, ſo I tell you again, chriſtianity will profit you nothing.

Let

Let each of us therefore ſeriouſly put this queſtion to our hearts: Have we received the Holy Ghoſt ſince we believed? Are we new creatures in CHRIST, or no? At leaſt, if we are not ſo yet, is it our daily endeavour to become ſuch? Do we conſtantly and conſcientiouſly uſe all the means of grace required thereto? Do we faſt, watch and pray? Do we, not lazily ſeek, but laboriouſly ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait gate? In ſhort, do we renounce our own righteouſneſs, take up our croſſes and follow CHRIST? If ſo, we are in that narrow way which leads to life; the good ſeed is ſown in our hearts, and will, if duly watered and nouriſhed by a regular perſevering uſe of all the means of grace, grow up to eternal life. But on the contrary, if we have only heard, and know not experimentally, whether there be any Holy Ghoſt; if we are ſtrangers to faſting, watching and prayer, and all the other ſpiritual exerciſes of devotion; if we are content to go in the broad way, merely becauſe we ſee moſt other people do ſo, without once reflecting whether it be the right one or not; in ſhort, if we are ſtrangers, nay enemies to the croſs of CHRIST, by lives of worldly-mindedneſs, and ſenſual pleaſure, and thereby make others think, that chriſtianity is but an empty name, a bare formal profeſſion; if this be the caſe, I ſay, CHRIST is as yet dead in vain, to us; we are under the guilt of our ſins; and are unacquainted with a true and thorough converſion.

But beloved, I am perſuaded better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation, though I thus ſpeak; I would humbly hope that you are ſincerely perſuaded, that he who hath not the Spirit of CHRIST is none of his; and that, unleſs the Spirit, which raiſed JESUS from the dead, dwell in you here, neither will your mortal bodies be quickened by the ſame Spirit to dwell with him hereafter.

Let me therefore (as was propoſed in the *laſt* place) earneſtly exhort you, in the name of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, to act ſuitable to thoſe convictions, and to live as chriſtians, that are commanded in holy writ, to "put off their former converſation concerning the Old Man, and to put on the New

New Man, which is created after GOD in righteouſneſs and true holineſs."

It muſt be owned indeed, that this is a great and difficult work; but, bleſſed be GOD, it is not impoſſible. Many thouſands of happy ſouls have been aſſiſted by a divine power to bring it about, and why ſhould we deſpair of ſucceſs? Is GOD's hand ſhortened, that it cannot ſave? Was he the GOD of our Fathers, is he not the GOD of their children alſo? Yes, doubtleſs, of their children alſo. It is a taſk likewiſe, that will put us to ſome pain; it will oblige us to part with ſome luſt, to break with ſome friend, to mortify ſome beloved paſſion, which may be exceeding dear to us, and perhaps as hard to leave, as to cut off a right-hand, or pluck out a right-eye. But what of all this? Will not the being made a real living member of CHRIST, a child of GOD, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, abundantly make amends for all this trouble? Undoubtedly it will.

The ſetting about and carrying on this great and neceſſary work, perhaps may, nay aſſuredly will expoſe us alſo to the ridicule of the unthinking part of mankind, who will wonder, that we run not into the ſame exceſs of riot with themſelves; and becauſe we deny our ſinful appetites, and are not conformed to this world, being commanded in ſcripture to do the one, and to have our converſation in heaven, in oppoſition to the other, they may count our lives folly, and our end to be without honour. But will not the being numbered among the ſaints, and ſhining as the ſtars for ever and ever, be a more than ſufficient recompenſe for all the ridicule, calumny, or reproach, we can poſſibly meet with here?

Indeed, was there no other reward attended a thorough converſion, but that peace of GOD, which is the unavoidable conſequence of it, and which, even in this life, "paſſeth all underſtanding," we ſhould have great reaſon to rejoice. But when we conſider, that this is the leaſt of thoſe mercies GOD has prepared for thoſe that are in CHRIST, and become new creatures; that, this is but the beginning of an eternal ſucceſſion

ceſſion of pleaſures; that the day of our deaths, which the unconverted, unrenewed ſinner muſt ſo much dread, will be, as it were, but the firſt day of our new births, and open to us an everlaſting ſcene of happineſs and comfort; in ſhort, if we remember, that they who are regenerate and born again, have a real title to all the glorious promiſes of the goſpel, and are infallibly certain of being as happy, both here and hereafter, as an all-wiſe, all-gracious, all-powerful GOD can make them; methinks, every one that has but the leaſt concern for the ſalvation of his precious and immortal ſoul, having ſuch promiſes, ſuch an hope, ſuch an eternity of happineſs ſet before him, ſhould never ceaſe watching, praying, and ſtriving, till he find a real, inward, ſaving change wrought in his heart, and thereby doth know of a truth, that he dwells in CHRIST, and CHRIST in him; that he is a new creature, therefore a child of GOD; that he is already an inheritor, and will ere long be an actual poſſeſſor of the kingdom of heaven.

Which GOD of his infinite mercy grant, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

To whom, &c.

SERMON

SERMON L.

Chriſtians, Temples of the living GOD.

2 COR. vi. 16.

Ye are the Temple of the living God.

ISAIAH, ſpeaking of the glory of goſpel days, ſaid, "Men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the e ſeen, O GOD, beſides thee, what he hath prepared for m that waiteth for him." Chap. lxiv. 4. Could a world ing in the wicked one, be really convinced of this, they ould need no other motive to induce them to renounce iemſelves, take up their croſs, and follow JESUS CHRIST. nd had believers this truth always deeply impreſſed upon ieir ſouls, they could not but abſtain from every evil, be conſtantly aſpiring after every good; and in a word, uſe all diligence to walk worthy of Him who hath called them to his kingdom and glory. If I miſtake not, that is the end purpoſed by the apoſtle *Paul*, in the words of the text, "Ye are he temple of the living GOD." Words originally directed to he church of *Corinth*, but which equally belong to us, and o our children, and to as many as the LORD our GOD ſhall all. To give you the true meaning of, and then practically o improve them, ſhall be my endeavour in the following diſcourſe.

Firſt, I ſhall endeavour to give you the true meaning of theſe words, "Ye are the temple of the living GOD." The expreſſion undoubtedly is metaphorical, or figurative: but

under the metaphor, ſomething real, and of infinite importance, is to be underſtood. And there ſeems to be a manifeſt alluſion, not only to what we call temples or churches in general, but to the *Jewiſh temple* in particular. I truſt, that but few, if any here, need be informed, that the preparations for this edifice were exceedingly grand, that it was modelled and built by a divine order, and when compleated, was ſeparated from common uſes, and dedicated to the ſervice of the incomprehenſible Jehovah, with the utmoſt ſolemnity.

It is thus that chriſtians are "the temple of the living GOD," of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; they who once held a conſultation to create, are all equally concerned in making preparations for, and effectually bringing about the redemption of man. The Father creates, the Son redeems, and the Holy Ghoſt ſanctifies all the elect people of GOD. Being loved from eternity, they are effectually called in time, they are choſen out of the world, and not only by an external formal dedication at baptiſm, or at the LORD's ſupper, but by a free, voluntary, unconſtrained oblation, they devote themſelves, ſpirit, ſoul, and body, to the entire ſervice of Him, who hath loved and given himſelf for them.

This is true and undefiled religion before GOD our heavenly Father: This is the real chriſtian's *reaſonable ſervice*, or, as ſome think the word imports, this is the ſervice required of us in the word of GOD. It implies no leſs than a total renunciation of the world; in ſhort, turns the chriſtian's whole life into one continued ſacrifice of love to GOD; ſo that, "whether he eats or drinks, he does all to his glory." Not that I would hereby inſinuate, that to be chriſtians, or to keep to the words of our text, in order to be temples of the living GOD, we muſt become hermits, or ſhut ourſelves up in nunneries or cloyſters; this be far from me! No. The religion, which this bible in my hand preſcribes, is a ſocial religion, a religion equally practicable by high and low, rich and poor, and which abſolutely requires a due diſcharge of all relative duties, in whatſoever ſtate of life GOD ſhall be pleaſed to place and continue us.

That ſome, in all ages of the church, have literally ſeparated themſelves from the world, and from a ſincere deſire to ſave their ſouls, and attain higher degrees of chriſtian perfection, have wholly devoted themſelves to ſolitude and retirement, is what I make no doubt of. But then ſuch a zeal is in no wiſe according to knowledge; for private chriſtians, as well as miniſters, are ſaid to be "the ſalt of the earth, and the lights of the world," and are commanded to "let their light ſhine before men." But how can this be done, if we ſhut ourſelves up, and thereby entirely exclude ourſelves from all manner of converſation with the world? Or ſuppoſing we could take the wings of the morning, and fly into the moſt diſtant and deſolate parts of the earth, what would this avail us, unleſs we could agree with a wicked heart and wicked tempter not to purſue and moleſt us there?

So far ſhould we be from thus getting eaſe and comfort, that I believe we ſhould on the contrary ſoon find by our experience the truth of what a hermit himſelf once told me, that a tree which ſtands by itſelf, is moſt expoſed and liable to the ſtrongeſt blaſts. When our Saviour was to be tempted by the devil, he was led by the Spirit into the wilderneſs. How contrary this to their practice, who go into a wilderneſs to avoid temptation! Surely ſuch are unmindful of the petition put up for us by our bleſſed LORD, "Father, I pray not that thou wouldſt take them out of the world, but that thou wouldſt keep them from the evil." This then is to be a chriſtian indeed; to be in the world, and yet not of it; to have our hands, according to our reſpective ſtations in life, employed on earth, and our hearts at the ſame time fixed on things above. Then, indeed, are we "temples of the living GOD," when with a humble boldneſs, we can ſay with a great and good ſoldier of JESUS CHRIST, we are the ſame in the parlour, as we are in the cloſet; and can at night throw off our cares, as we throw off our cloaths; and being at peace with the world, ourſelves, and GOD, are indifferent whether we ſleep or die.

Farther, the Jewiſh temple was a houſe of prayer. "My houſe (ſays the Great GOD) ſhall be called a houſe of prayer:"

and implies that the hearts of true believers are the ſeats of prayer. For this end was it built, and adorned with ſuch furniture. *Solomon*, in that admirable prayer which he put up to GOD at the dedication of the temple, ſaith, "Hearken therefore unto the ſupplication of thy ſervant, and of thy people *Iſrael*, which they ſhall make towards this place." And hence I ſuppoſe it was that *Daniel*, that man greatly beloved, in the time of captivity, "prayed as aforetime three times a day with his face towards the temple." And what was ſaid of the firſt, our LORD applies to the ſecond temple, "My houſe ſhall be called a houſe of prayer." On this account alſo, true believers may be ſtiled, "the temple of the living GOD." For being wholly devoted and dedicated to GOD, even a GOD in CHRIST, their heart becomes the ſeats of prayer, from whence, as ſo many living altars, a perpetual ſacrifice of prayer and praiſe (like unto, tho' infinitely ſuperior to the perpetual oblation under the Moſaic diſpenſation) is continually aſcending, and offered up, to the Father of Mercies, the GOD of all Conſolations. Such, and ſuch only, who thus worſhip GOD in the temple of their hearts, can truly be ſaid to be made prieſts unto GOD, or be ſtiled a royal prieſthood; ſuch, and ſuch only, can truly be ſtiled, "the temple of the living GOD," becauſe ſuch only pray to him, as one expreſſes it, in the temple of their hearts, and conſequently worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth.

Let no one ſay that ſuch a devotion is impracticable, or at leaſt only practicable by a few, and thoſe ſuch who have nothing to do with the common affairs of life; for this is the common duty and privilege of all true chriſtians. "To pray without ceaſing," and "to rejoice in the LORD always," are precepts equally obligatory on all that name the name of CHRIST. And though it muſt be owned, that it is hard for perſons that are immerſed in the world, to ſerve the LORD without diſtraction; and though we muſt confeſs, that the lamp of devotion, even in the beſt of ſaints, ſometimes burns too dimly, yet thoſe who are the temple of the living GOD, find prayer to be their very element: And when thoſe who make this objection, once come to love prayer, as ſome unhappy

happy men love ſwearing, they will find no more difficulty in praying to, and praiſing GOD always, than theſe unhappy creatures do in curſing and ſwearing always. What hath been advanced, is far from being a ſtate peculiar to perſons wholly retired from the world.

My brethren, the love of GOD is all in all. When once poſſeſſed of this, as we certainly muſt be, if we are "the temple of the living GOD," meditation, prayer, praiſe, and other ſpiritual exerciſes, become habitual and delightful. When once touched with this divine magnet, for ever after the ſoul feels a divine attraction, and continually turns to its centre, GOD; and if diverted therefrom, by any ſudden or violent temptation, yet when that obſtruction is removed, like as a needle touched by a loadſtone when your finger is taken away, turns to its reſt, its centre, its GOD, its All, again.

The Jewiſh temple was alſo a place where the Great Jehovah was pleaſed in a more immediate manner to reſide. Hence, he is ſaid to put and record his name there, and to ſit or dwell between the cherubims; and when *Solomon* firſt dedicated it, we are told, "the houſe was filled with a cloud, ſo that the prieſts could not ſtand to miniſter by reaſon of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD had filled the houſe." And wherefore all this amazing manifeſtation of the Divine Glory? Even for this, O man, to ſhew thee how the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, would make believers hearts his living temple, and dwell and make his abode in all thoſe that tremble at his word.

To this, the apoſtle more particularly alludes in the words immediately following our text; for having called the *Corinthians* "the temple of the living GOD," he adds, "as GOD hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and I will walk in them, and I will be their GOD, and they ſhall be my people." Strange and ſtrong expreſſions theſe! But ſtrange and ſtrong as they are, muſt be experienced by all who are indeed "the temple of the living GOD." For they are ſaid, to be "choſen to be a holy habitation through the Spirit; to dwell in GOD,

and GOD in them; to have the witneſs in themſelves, and to have GOD's Spirit witneſſing with their ſpirits that they are the children of GOD." Which expreſſions import no more or leſs, than that prayer of our LORD which he put up for his church and people a little before his bitter paſſion, "That they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one:" This glorious paſſage our church adopts in her excellent communion office, and is ſo far from thinking that this was only the privilege of the apoſtles, that ſhe aſſerts in the ſtrongeſt terms, that it is the privilege of every worthy communicant. For then (ſays ſhe) if we receive the ſacrament worthily, we are one with CHRIST, and CHRIST is one with us; we dwell in CHRIST, and CHRIST in us. And what is it, but that inſpiration of the Holy Spirit, which we pray for in the beginning of that office, and that fellowſhip of the Holy Ghoſt, which the miniſter, in the concluſion of every day's public prayer, entreats the LORD to be with us all evermore?

Brethren, the time would fail me to mention all the ſcriptures, and the various branches of our liturgy, articles, and homilies, that ſpeak of this ineſtimable bleſſing, the indwelling of the bleſſed Spirit, whereby we do indeed become, "the temples of the living GOD." If you have eyes that ſee, or ears that hear, you may view it almoſt in every page of the lively oracles, and every part of thoſe offices, which ſome of you daily uſe, and hear read to you, in the public worſhip of Almighty GOD. In aſſerting therefore this doctrine, we do not vent the whimſies of a diſordered brain, and heated imagination; neither do we broach any new doctrines, or ſet up the peculiar opinions of any particular ſect or denomination of chriſtians whatſoever; but we ſpeak the words of truth and ſoberneſs, we ſhew you the right and good old way, even that, in which the articles of all the reformed churches, and all ſincere chriſtians of all parties, however differing in other reſpects, do univerſally agree. We are now inſiſting upon a point, which may properly be termed the chriſtian *ſhibboleth*, ſomething which is the grand criterion of our moſt holy religion; and on account of which, the holy *Ignatius*, one of the

the firſt fathers of the church, was uſed to ſtile himſelf a *bearer of* GOD, and the people to whom he wrote, *bearers of* GOD: For this, as it is recorded of him, he was arraigned before *Trajan*, who imperiouſly ſaid, Where is this man, that ſays, he carries GOD about with him. With an humble boldneſs he anſwered, I am he, and then quoted the paſſage in the text "Ye are the temple of the living GOD; as GOD hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their GOD, and they ſhall be my people." Upon this, to cure him of his enthuſiaſm, he was condemned to be devoured by lions.

Bleſſed be GOD! we are not in danger of being called before ſuch perſecuting *Trajans* now: under our preſent mild and happy adminiſtration, the ſcourge of the tongue is all that they can legally laſh us with. But if permitted to go farther, we need not be aſhamed of witneſſing this good confeſſion. Suffering grace will be given for ſuffering times; and if, like *Ignatius*, we are bearers of GOD, we alſo ſhall be enabled to ſay with him, when led to the devouring lions, Now I begin to be a diſciple of CHRIST.

But it is time for me,

Secondly, To make ſome practical improvement of what has been delivered. You have heard in what ſenſe it is that real chriſtians are "the temple of the living GOD." Shall I aſk, Believe ye theſe things? I know and am perſuaded that ſome of you do indeed believe them, not becauſe I have told you, but becauſe you yourſelves have experienced the ſame.

I congratulate you from my inmoſt ſoul. O that your hearts may be in tune this day to "magnify the LORD," and your ſpirits prepared to "rejoice in GOD your Saviour." Like the Virgin *Mary*, you are highly favoured, and from henceforth all the generations of GOD's people ſhall call you bleſſed. You can call CHRIST, Lord, by the Holy Ghoſt, and thereby have an internal, as well as external evidence of the divinity, both of his perſon, and of his holy word. You

can now prove that deſpiſed book, emphatically called The Scriptures, doth contain the perfect and acceptable will of GOD. You have found the ſecond *Adam* to be a quickening ſpirit; He hath raiſed you from death to life. And being thus taught, and born of GOD, however unlearned in other reſpects, you can ſay, "Is not this the CHRIST?" O ineffable bleſſing! inconceivable privilege! GOD's ſpirit witneſſeth with your ſpirits, that you are the children of GOD. When you think of this, are you not ready to cry out with the beloved diſciple, "What manner of love is this, that we ſhould be called the children of GOD!" I believe that holy man was in an extaſy when he wrote theſe words; and tho' he has been in heaven ſo long, yet his extatic ſurprize is but now beginning, and will be but as beginning through the ages of eternity. Thus ſhall it be with all you likewiſe, whom the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, hath made his living temples. For He hath ſealed you to the day of redemption, and hath given you the earneſt of your future inheritance. His eyes and heart ſhall therefore be upon you continually: and in ſpite of all oppoſition from men or devils, the top-ſtone of this ſpirituaul building ſhall be brought forth, and you ſhall ſhout Grace, grace unto it: your bodies ſhall be faſhioned like unto the Redeemer's glorious body, and your ſouls, in which (O infinite condeſcenſion!) He now delights to dwell, ſhall be filled with all the fulneſs of GOD. You ſhall then go no more out; you ſhall then no more need the light of the ſun or the light of the moon, for the LORD himſelf will be your temple, and the Lamb in the midſt thereof ſhall be your glory. Dearly beloved in the LORD, what ſay you to theſe things? Do not your hearts burn within you whilſt thinking of theſe deep, but glorious truths of GOD. Whilſt I am muſing, and ſpeaking of them, methinks a fire kindles even in this cold, icy heart of mine: O what ſhall we render unto the LORD for all theſe mercies! Surely He hath done great things for us: How great is his goodneſs, and his bounty! O the heighth, the depth, the length, and the breadth of the love of GOD! Surely it paſſeth knowledge. O for humility! and a ſoul-abaſing, GOD-exalting ſenſe of theſe things! When the bleſſed virgin went

into the hill country, to pay a viſit to her couſin *Elizabeth*, amazed at ſuch a favour, ſhe cried out, "Whence is it that the mother of my LORD vouchſafes to come to me?" And when the great Jehovah filled the temple with his glory, out of the abundance of his heart, king *Solomon* burſt forth into this pathetic exclamation, "But will GOD in very deed dwell with men on the earth?" With how much greater aſtoniſhment ought we to ſay, And will the LORD himſelf in very deed come to us? Will the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, dwell in, and make our earthly hearts his living temples? My brethren, whence is this? From any fitneſs in us foreſeen? No, I know you diſclaim ſuch an unbecoming thought. Was it then from the improvement of our own free-will? No, I am perſuaded you will not thus debaſe the riches of GOD's free grace. Are you not all ready to ſay, Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy free, thy unmerited, thy ſovereign, diſtinguiſhing love and mercy, O LORD, be all the glory. It is this, and this alone, hath made the difference between us and others. We have nothing but what is freely given us from above: if we love GOD, it is becauſe GOD firſt loved us. Let us look then unto the rock from whence we have been hewn, and the hole of the pit from whence we have been digged. And if there be any conſolation in CHRIST, if any comfort of love, if any fellowſhip of the ſpirit, if any bowels and mercies, let us ſtudy and ſtrive to walk as becometh thoſe who are made the temples of the living GOD, or, as the apoſtle elſewhere expreſſeth himſelf, "a holy temple unto the LORD." What manner of perſons ought ſuch to be in all holy converſation and godlineſs? How holily and how purely ſhould we live! As our apoſtle argues in another place, "For what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? What communion hath light with darkneſs? Or what concord hath CHRIST with Belial?" Shall thoſe who are temples of the living GOD, ſuffer themſelves to be dens of thieves and cages of unclean birds? Shall vain unchaſte thoughts be ſuffered to dwell within them? much leſs ſhall any thing that is impure be conceived or acted by them? Shall we provoke the LORD to jealouſy? GOD forbid! We all know with what diſtinguiſhed ardor

our

our bleſſed Redeemer purged an earthly temple; a zeal for his father's houſe even eat him up: with what a holy vehemence did he overturn the tables of the money-changers, and ſcourge the buyers and ſellers out before him! Why? They made his father's houſe a houſe of merchandiſe: they had turned the houſe of prayer into a den of thieves.

O my brethren, how often have you and I been guilty of this great evil? How often have the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the pride of life, inſenſibly ſtolen away our hearts from GOD? Once they were indeed houſes of prayer; faith, hope, love, peace, joy, and all the other fruits of the bleſſed Spirit lodged within them; but now, O now, it may be, thieves and robbers. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.* Hence thoſe hidings of GOD's face, that dryneſs, and deadneſs, and barrenneſs of ſoul, thoſe weariſome nights and days, which many of us have felt from time to time, and have been made to groan under. Hence thoſe dolorous and heart-breaking complaints, "O that I knew where I might find him! O that it was with me as in days of old, when the candle of the LORD ſhone bright upon my ſoul!" Hence thoſe domeſtic trials, thoſe perſonal loſſes and diſappointments: and to this perhaps ſome of us may add, hence all thoſe public rebukes with which we have been viſited: they are all only as ſo many ſcourges of ſmall cords in the loving Redeemer's hands, to ſcourge the buyers and ſellers out of the temple of our hearts. O that we may know the rod and who hath appointed it! He hath chaſtiſed us with whips: may we be wiſe, and by a more cloſe and circumſpect walk prevent his chaſtiſing us in time to come with ſcorpions! But who is ſufficient for this thing? None but thou, O LORD, to whom alone all hearts are open, all deſires known, and from whom no ſecrets are hidden! Cleanſe thou therefore the thoughts of our hearts by the inſpiration of thy bleſſed Spirit, that henceforward we may more perfectly love thee, and more worthily magnify thy holy name!

But are not ſome of you ready to object, and to fear, that the LORD hath forgotten to be gracious, that he hath ſhut

up

up his loving kindneſs in diſpleaſure, and that he will be no more entreated? Thus the pſalmiſt once thought, when viſited for his backſlidings with GOD's heavy hand. But he acknowledged this to be his infirmity; and whether you think of it or no, I tell you, this is your infirmity. O ye dejected, deſponding, diſtruſtful ſouls, hear ye the word of the LORD, and call to mind his wonderful declarations of old to his people. "I, even I am He that blotteth out thy tranſgreſſions: for a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with everlaſting mercies will I gather thee. Can a woman forget her ſucking child? Yes ſhe may, but the LORD will not forget you, O ye of little faith. For as a father pitieth his own children, ſo doth the LORD pity them that fear him. How ſhall I give thee up, O *Ephraim?* How ſhall I make thee as *Admah?* How ſhall I ſet thee as *Zeboim?*" And what is the reſult of all theſe interrogations? "My repentings are kindled together: I will not return to execute the fierceneſs of my anger againſt *Ephraim:* For I am GOD, and not man." And is not the language of all theſe endearing paſſages, like that of *Joſeph* to his ſelf-convicted, troubled brethren? "Come near to me." O that it may be ſaid of you, as it is ſaid of them, "And they came near unto him." Then ſhould you find by happy experience, that the LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, is indeed ſlow to anger and of great kindneſs, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knows but he may come down this day, this hour, nay this moment, and ſuddenly reviſit the temple of your hearts? Who knows but he may revive his work in your precious ſouls, cauſe you to return to your firſt love, help you to do your firſt works, and even exceed your hopes, and cauſe the glory of this ſecond viſitation even to ſurpaſs that glory which filled your hearts, in that happy, never to be forgotten day, in which he firſt vouchſafed to make you his living temples? Even ſo, Father, let it ſeem good in thy ſight!

But the improvement of our ſubject muſt not end here. Hitherto I have been giving bread to the children; and it is my meat and drink ſo to do: but muſt nothing be ſaid to thoſe of you who are without? I mean to ſuch who cannot

yet

yet ſay, that they are "the temple of the living GOD." And O how great, put you all together, may the number of you be: by far, in all probability, the greateſt part of this auditory. Say not I am uncharitable; the GOD of truth hath ſaid it, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Suffer me to ſpeak plainly to you, my brethren; you have heard what has been ſaid upon the words of our text, and what muſt be wrought in us, ere we can truly ſay that we are "the temple of the living GOD." Is it ſo with you? Are ye ſeparated from the world and worldly tempers? Are your hearts become houſes of prayer? Doth the Spirit of GOD dwell in your ſouls? and whether you eat or drink, or whatſoever you do, as to the habitual bent of your minds, do you do all to the glory of GOD? Theſe are ſhort, but plain, and let me tell you very important queſtions. What anſwer can you make to them? Say not, "Go thy way, and at a more convenient ſeaſon I will call for thee." I will not, I muſt not ſuffer you to put me off ſo; I demand an anſwer in the name of the LORD of Hoſts. What ſay ye? Methinks, I hear you ſay, We have been dedicated to GOD in baptiſm, we go to church or meeting, we ſay our prayers, repeat our creeds, or have ſubſcribed the articles, and the confeſſion of faith; we are quite orthodox, and great friends to the doctrines of grace; we do no body any harm, we are honeſt moral people, we are churc-hmembers, we keep up family-prayer, and conſtantly go to the table of the LORD." All theſe things are good in their places. But thus far, nay much farther may you go, and yet be far from the kingdom of GOD. The unprofitable ſervant did no one any harm; and the fooliſh virgins had a lamp of an outward profeſſion, and went up even to heaven's gate, calling CHRIST, "Lord, Lord." Theſe things may make you whited ſepulchres, but not "the temples of the living GOD." Alas! Alas! one thing you yet lack, the one chief thing, and without which all is nothing; I mean the indwelling of GOD's bleſſed Spirit, without which you can never become "the temples of the living GOD."

Awake

Awake therefore, ye deceived formaliſts, awake; who, vainly puffed up with your model of performances, boaſtingly cry out, "The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD are we." Awake, ye outward-court worſhippers: ye are building on a ſandy foundation: take heed leſt you alſo go to hell by the very door of heaven. Behold, and remember, I have told you before.

And as for you who have done none of theſe things, who inſtead of making an outward profeſſion of religion, have as it were renounced your baptiſm, proclaim your ſin like *Sodom*, and wilfully and daringly live as without GOD in the world; I aſk you, how can you think to eſcape, if you perſiſt in neglecting ſuch a great ſalvation. Verily, I ſhould utterly deſpair of your ever attaining the bleſſed privilege of being temples of the living GOD, did I not hear of thouſands, who through the grace of GOD have been tranſlated from a like ſtate of darkneſs into his marvellous light. Such, ſays the apoſtle *Paul*, writing to theſe very *Corinthians* who were now GOD's living temples, (drunkards, whoremongers, adulterers, and ſuch like) "ſuch were ſome of you. But ye are waſhed, but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the name of the LORD JESUS, and by the Spirit of our GOD." O that the ſame bleſſed Spirit may this day vouchſafe to come and pluck you alſo as brands out of the burning! Behold, I warn you to flee from the wrath to come. Go home, and meditate on theſe things; and think whether it is not infinitely better, even here, to be temples of the living GOD, than to be bond-ſlaves to every brutiſh luſt, and to be led captive by the devil at his will. The LORD JESUS can, and if you fly to him for refuge, he will ſet your ſouls at liberty. He hath led captivity captive, he hath aſcended up on high, on purpoſe to receive this gift of the bleſſed Spirit of GOD for men, "even for the rebellious," that he might dwell in your hearts by faith here, and thereby prepare you to dwell with Him and all the heavenly hoſt in his kingdom hereafter.

That this may be the happy lot of you all, may GOD of his infinite mercy grant, for the ſake of his dear Son CHRIST JESUS

JESUS our LORD; to whom with the Father, and the bleſſed Spirit, three perſons, but one GOD, be aſcribed all power, might, majeſty, and dominion, now and for evermore. Amen! and Amen!

SERMON

SERMON LI.

CHRIST the only Preſervative againſt a Reprobate Spirit.

2 COR. xiii. 5.

Know ye not your ownſelves, how that JESUS CHRIST *is in you, except ye be Reprobates.*

THE doctrines of the goſpel are doctrines of peace, and they bring comfort to all who believe in them; they are not like the law given by *Moſes*, which conſiſted of troubleſome and painful ceremonies; neither do they carry with them that terror which the law did; as, "curſed is every one who continueth not to do all things which are written in the book of the law:" If you were to keep the whole law, and break but in one point, you are guilty of the breach of all. The law denounces threatnings againſt all who do not conform to her ſtrict commands; but the goſpel is a declaration of grace, peace and mercy; here you have an account of the blood of CHRIST, blood which ſpeaketh better things than that of *Abel*; for *Abel*'s blood cried aloud for vengeance, vengeance: But JESUS CHRIST's crieth mercy, mercy, mercy upon the guilty ſinner. If he comes to CHRIST, confeſſes and forſakes his ſin, then JESUS will have mercy upon him: And if, my brethren, you are but ſenſible of your ſins, convinced of your iniquities, and feel yourſelves loſt, undone ſinners, and come and tell CHRIST of your loſt condition, you will ſoon find how ready he is to help you; he

he will give you his ſpirit; and if you have his ſpirit you cannot be reprobates: you will find his ſpirit to be quickening and refreſhing; not like the ſpirit of the world, a ſpirit of reproach, envy, and all uncharitableneſs.

Moſt of your own experiences will confirm the truth hereof; for are not you reproached and ſlandered, and does not the world ſay all manner of evil againſt you, merely becauſe you follow JESUS CHRIST; becauſe you will not go to the ſame exceſs of riot with them? While they are ſinging the ſongs of the drunkard, you are ſinging pſalms and hymns: while they are at a playhouſe, you are hearing a ſermon: while they are drinking, revelling and miſpending their precious time, and haſtening on their own deſtruction, you are reading, praying, meditating, and working out your ſalvation with fear and trembling. This is matter enough for a world to reproach you; you are not polite and faſhionable enough for them. If you will live godly, you muſt ſuffer perſecution; you muſt not expect to go through this world without being perſecuted and reviled. If you were of the world, the world would love you; for it always loves its own; but if you are not of the world, it will hate you; it has done ſo in all ages, it never loved any but thoſe who were pleaſed with its vanities and allurements. It has been the death of many a lover of JESUS, merely becauſe they have loved him: And, therefore, my brethren, do not be ſurprized if you meet with a fiery trial, for all thoſe things will be a means of ſending you to your maſter the ſooner.

The ſpirit of the world is hatred; that of CHRIST is love; the ſpirit of the world is vexation; that of CHRIST is pleaſure: the ſpirit of the world is ſorrow; that of CHRIST is joy: the ſpirit of the world is evil, and that of CHRIST is good: the ſpirit of the world will never ſatisfy us, but CHRIST's ſpirit is all ſatisfaction; the ſpirit of the world is miſery; that of CHRIST is eaſe. In one word, the ſpirit of the world has nothing laſting; but the ſpirit of CHRIST is durable, and will laſt through an eternity of ages: the ſpirit of CHRIST will remove every difficulty, ſatisfy every doubt,

and

and be a means of bringing you to himself, to live with him for ever and ever.

From the words of my text, I shall shew you,

I. The necessity of receiving the spirit of CHRIST.

II. Who CHRIST is, whose spirit you are to receive. And then

Shall conclude with an exhortation to all of you, high and low, rich and poor, to come unto the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and to beg that you may receive his spirit, so that you may not be reprobates.

First, I am to shew you the necessity there is of receiving the spirit of CHRIST.

And here, my brethren, it will be necessary to consider you as in your first state; that is, when GOD first created *Adam*, and placed him in the garden of *Eden*, and gave him a privilege of eating of all the trees in the garden, except the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which stood in the midst thereof. Our first parents had not been long in this state of innocence, before they fell from it, they broke the divine commands, and involved all their posterity in guilt; for as *Adam* was our representative, so we were to stand or fall in him; and as he was our federal head, his falling involved all our race under the power of death, for death came into the world by sin; and we all became liable to the eternal punishment due from GOD, for man's disobedience to the divine command.

Now as man had sinned, and a satisfaction was demanded, it was impossible for a finite creature to satisfy him, who was a GOD of so strict purity as not to behold iniquity: And man by the justice of GOD would have been sent down into the pit, which was prepared of old for the devil and his angels; but when justice was going to pass the irrevocable sentence, then the LORD JESUS CHRIST came and offered himself a ranfom

a ranſom for poor ſinners. Here was admirable condeſcenſion of the LORD JESUS CHRIST! that he who was in the boſom of his father, ſhould come down from all that glory, to die for ſuch rebels as you and I are, who if it lay in our power, would pull the Almighty from his throne: Now can you think that if there was no need of CHRIST's death, can you think that if there could have been any other ranſom found, whereby poor ſinners might have been ſaved, GOD would not have ſpared his only begotten Son, and not have delivered him up for all that believe in him?

This, my brethren, I think proves to a demonſtration, that it was neceſſary for CHRIST to die: But conſider, it will be of no ſervice to know that CHRIST died for ſinners, if you do not accept of his ſpirit, that you may be ſanctified, and fitted for the reception of that JESUS, who died for all thoſe who believe in him. The ſin of your nature, your original ſin, is ſufficient to ſink you into torments, of which there will be no end; therefore unleſs you receive the ſpirit of CHRIST you are reprobates, and you cannot be ſaved: Nothing ſhort of the blood of JESUS applied to your ſouls, will make you happy to all eternity: Then, ſeeing this is ſo abſolutely neceſſary, that you cannot be ſaved without having received the ſpirit of CHRIST, but that ye are reprobates, do not reſt contented 'till you have good hopes, through grace, that the good work is begun in your ſouls; that you have received a pardon for your ſins; that CHRIST came down from heaven, died, and made ſatisfaction for your ſins. Don't flatter yourſelves that a little morality will be ſufficient to ſave you; that going to church, or prayers, and ſacrament, and doing all the duties of religion in an external manner, will ever carry you to heaven; no, you muſt have grace in your hearts; there muſt be a change of the whole man.

You muſt be born again, and become new creatures, and have the ſpirit of CHRIST within you: And until you have that ſpirit of CHRIST, however you may think to the contrary, and pleaſe yourſelves in your own imagination, I ſay, you are no better than reprobates. You may content your-

ſelves with leading civil, outward decent lives, but what will that avail you, unleſs you have the ſpirit of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in your hearts: His kingdom muſt be ſet up in your ſouls; there muſt be the life of GOD in the ſoul of man, elſe you belong not to the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and until you belong to him, you are reprobates.

This may ſeem as enthuſiaſm to ſome of you, but if it is ſo, it is what the apoſtle *Paul* taught; and therefore, my brethren, they are the words of truth. I beſeech you, in the mercies of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, not to deſpiſe theſe words, as if they do not concern you, but were only calculated for the firſt ages of chriſtianity, and, therefore, of no ſignification: If you think thus, you are wronging your own ſouls; for whatever is written, was written for you in theſe times, as well as for the chriſtians in the firſt ages of the church.

For the caſe ſtands thus between GOD and man: GOD, at firſt, made man upright, or, as the ſacred penman expreſſes it, "In the image of GOD made he man;" his ſoul was the very copy, the tranſcript of the divine nature. He who had, by his almighty power, ſpoken the world into being, breathed into man the breath of ſpiritual life; and his ſoul became adorned with purity and perfection. This was the finiſhing ſtroke of the creation; the perfection both of the moral and material world; and it ſo reſembled the divine Original, that GOD could not but rejoice and take pleaſure in his own likeneſs: Therefore, we read, that when GOD had finiſhed the inanimate and brutiſh part of the creation, "he looked, and behold it was good." But when that lovely, god-like creature man was made, "behold it was very good."

Happy, unſpeakably happy, to be thus partaker of a divine Nature; and thus man might have continued ſtill, had he continued holy; but GOD placed him in a ſtate of probation, with a free grant to eat of every tree in the garden, except the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The day he did eat thereof he was not only to become ſubject to temporal, but ſpiritual death; and ſo loſe that divine image, that ſpiritual

life which GOD had breathed into him, and which was as much his happineſs as his glory.

But man, unhappy man, being ſeduced by the devil, did eat of the forbidden fruit, and thereby became liable to that curſe which the eternal GOD had pronounced on him for his diſobedience. And we read, that ſoon after *Adam* was fallen, he complained that he was naked; naked, not only as to his body, but naked and deſtitute of thoſe divine graces which before beautified his ſoul.

An unhappy mutiny and diſorder then fell upon this world; thoſe briars and thorns which now ſpring up and overſpread the earth, were but poor emblems, lifeleſs repreſentations of that confuſion and rebellion which ſprung up in, and overwhelmed, the ſoul of man, immediately after the fall. He now ſunk into the temper of a beaſt and devil.

In this dreadful and diſordered condition are all of us brought into the world: We are told, my brethren, that "*Adam* had a ſon in his own likeneſs," or with the ſame corrupt nature which he himſelf had ſunk into, after eating the forbidden fruit: And experience, as well as ſcripture, proves, that we are altogether born in ſin, and, therefore, uncapable, whilſt in ſuch a ſtate, to have communion with GOD.

For as light cannot have communion with darkneſs, ſo GOD can have no communion with ſuch polluted ſons of *Belial*. Here, here, appears the great and glorious end, why CHRIST was manifeſt in the fleſh, to put an end to theſe diſorders, and to reſtore us unto the favour of GOD. He came down from heaven and ſhed his precious blood upon the croſs, to ſatisfy the divine juſtice of his Father, for our ſins; and ſo, he purchaſed this Holy Ghoſt, who muſt once more re-ſtamp the divine image on our hearts, and make us capable of living with, and enjoying of GOD. We muſt be renewed by the ſpirit of GOD; he muſt dwell in us before we can be new creatures, and be freed from a reprobate ſpirit: the

ſpirit of CHRIST muſt bring us home unto that fold where all his ſheep are, and implant his grace in our hearts, and take from us that ſpirit of ſin which reigns in us: And till this is rooted out of our hearts, however we may flatter ourſelves with being good chriſtians, becauſe we are good moraliſts, and lead civil, moral, decent lives, yet if we live and die, my brethren, in this way, we are only flattering ourſelves into hell.

I think I have proved, to a demonſtration, the neceſſity there is of receiving the ſpirit of CHRIST. I now come to ſhew you,

Secondly, Who CHRIST is, whoſe ſpirit you are to receive.

My brethren, JESUS CHRIST is coequal, coeſſential, coeternal, and conſubſtantial with the Father, very GOD of very GOD; and as there was not a moment of time in which GOD the Father was not, ſo there was not a moment of time in which GOD the Son was not.

Arians and *Socinians* deny this godhead of CHRIST, and eſteem him only as a creature: The *Arians* look on him as a titular Deity, as a created and ſubordinate God; but, if they would humbly ſearch the ſcriptures they would find divine homage paid to CHRIST. He is called GOD in ſcripture, particularly when the great evangelical Prophet ſays, "He ſhall be called the mighty GOD, the everlaſting Father, and the government ſhall be upon his ſhoulders:" And JESUS CHRIST himſelf ſays, that he is the Alpha and Omega;" and that "the world was made by him:" But though this be ever ſo plain, our gay airy ſparks of this age will not believe the LORD JESUS CHRIST to be equal with his Father, and that for no other reaſon, but becauſe it is a faſhionable and polite doctrine to deny his divinity, and eſteem him only as a created God.

Our *Socinians* do not go ſo far; they look upon CHRIST only to be a good man ſent from GOD, to ſhew the people the

way they ſhould go, on their forſaking of Judaiſm; that he was to be alſo an example to the world, and that his death was only to prove the truth of his doctrines.

Many of thoſe who call themſelves members, yea, teachers of the church of *England*, have got into this polite ſcheme. Good GOD! my very ſoul ſhudders at the thoughts of the conſequence that will attend ſuch a belief. O my brethren, do not think ſo diſhonourably of the LORD who bought you; of the JESUS who died for you: he muſt be all in all unto your ſouls, if ever you are ſaved by him: CHRIST muſt be your active, as well as paſſive obedience; his righteouſneſs muſt be imputed to you. The doctrine of CHRIST's righteouſneſs being imputed, is a comfortable, a deſirable doctrine to all real chriſtians: And to you, ſinners, who are enquiring what you muſt do to be ſaved? how uncomfortable would it be to tell you, by your own good works, when, perhaps, you have never done one good work in all your lives: This would be driving you to deſpair indeed; no, "believe in the LORD JESUS CHRIST and you ſhall be ſaved;" come to the LORD JESUS by faith, and he ſhall receive you. He is able and willing to ſave you.

This ſecond perſon in the Trinity, who is God-man, the mediator of the new covenant; he, my brethren, hath virtue enough, in his blood, to atone for the ſins of millions of worlds: As man he died, he was crucified, nailed to, and pierced on the accurſed tree: This was the love of the LORD JESUS CHRIST for you; and will you then have low and diſhonourable thoughts of JESUS CHRIST, after his having done ſo much for you? O my dear brethren, don't be ſo polite as to deny the Deity of CHRIST; though you may be counted fools in the eye of the world, yet in GOD's account, you ſhall be eſteemed wiſe, wiſe for ſalvation.

You may now be looked upon as fools and madmen, as a parcel of rabble, and, in a ſhort time, fit for Bedlam. They may ſay you are going to undermine the eſtabliſhed church; but GOD, who knows the ſecrets of all hearts, knows our innocency;

innocency; and I ſpeak the truth in CHRIST, I lie not, I ſhould rejoice to ſee all the world adhere to her articles; I ſhould rejoice to ſee the teachers, the miniſters of the church of *England*, preach up thoſe very articles they have ſubſcribed to; but thoſe miniſters who do preach them up, they eſteem as madmen, and look on them as the off-ſcouring of the earth, unfit for company and converſation.

The evil things they ſay of me, bleſſed be GOD, are without foundation; I am a friend to the church homilies; I am a friend to her liturgy, and if they did not thruſt me out of their churches, I would read it every day.

My brethren, I am not for limiting the ſpirit of GOD, but am for uniting all in the bonds of love; I love all that love the LORD JESUS CHRIST: This will make more chriſtians, than will the ſpirit of perſecution.

The Phariſees may think it madneſs to mention perſecution in a chriſtian country, but the ſpirit of perſecution reſides in many: their will is as great, but bleſſed be GOD, they want the power; if they had that, my brethren, fire and faggot is what we muſt expect, for the devil's temple is ſhaken. Many are coming unto JESUS, I hope many of you are already come, and many more coming; this muſt make Satan rage, to ſee his kingdom weakened; he will ſtir up all his malice againſt the people of GOD. We muſt expect, that a ſuffering time will certainly come; it is now haſtening on, it is ripening a-pace; then it will be proved, to a demonſtration, whether you are hypocrites or not; for ſuffering times are always trying times. O my brethren, do not be afraid of a little reproach, but look on it as a fore-runner of what will be the attendant upon it: Therefore let me, by way of application,

Exhort all of you, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, to come unto the LORD JESUS CHRIST, that he may give you ſtrength to undergo whatſoever he, in his wiſdom, calls you to. Come, come, my brethren, to JESUS

CHRIST, and he will give you grace, which will make you willing and ready to ſuffer all things for JESUS CHRIST.

It is not being pointed at; it is not being deſpiſed and looked on as mad, and a deluded people: Alas! what does this ſignify to a ſoul who has JESUS CHRIST? Do not be afraid to confeſs the bleſſed JESUS; dare to be ſingularly good: Don't be afraid of ſinging of hymns, or of meeting together to build each other up in the ways of the LORD; Shine ye as lights in the world amidſt a crooked and perverſe generation.

It is neceſſary that offences ſhould come, to try what is in our hearts, and whether we will be faithful ſoldiers of JESUS CHRIST or not; Be not content with following CHRIST afar off, for then we ſhall, as *Peter* did, ſoon deny him; but let us be altogether chriſtians. Let our ſpeech and all our actions declare to the whole world, whoſe diſciples we are, and that we have determined to know nothing but JESUS CHRIST, and him crucified. O then, then, will it be well with us, happy, unſpeakably happy, ſhall we be, even here; and what is infinitely better, when others that deſpiſed us ſhall be calling for the mountains to fall on them, and the hills to cover them, we ſhall be exalted to ſit down on the right hand of GOD, and ſhine as the ſun in the firmament, and live for ever with our Redeemer. And will not this be a ſufficient recompence for all the ſufferings you have undergone here? Therefore, do not ſtrive to have the greatneſs, the riches, the honour, and pleaſures of this world, but ſtrive to have JESUS CHRIST.

Your friends and carnal acquaintance, and, above all, your grand adverſary the devil, will be perſuading you not to have CHRIST until you are grown old; he would have you lay up goods for many years; to ſee plays, play at cards; go to balls, and maſquerades; and to make you the more willing, to draw you in, he calls ſinful pleaſures, innocent diverſions.

A late learned Rabbi of our church, told the people, in a ſermon, which I myſelf heard, that if people went to church

of

of a Sunday, and ſaid the prayers while there, that it was no harm, neither would GOD count it a ſin, to take their recreation, after the ſervice of the church was over: But I ſay, my brethren, and the command of GOD ſays ſo too, that the whole ſabbath muſt be kept holy; and that as GOD has allowed you ſix days for yourſelves, to do the duties in thoſe ſeveral ſtations wherein Providence has placed you, he expects you ſhould give him one day to himſelf; and will you waſte that ſabbath which ſhould be ſpent in gathering proviſions for your ſouls? GOD forbid!

You had ten thouſand times better be ignorant of all the polite diverſions of the age, than to be ignorant of the ſpirit of CHRIST's being within you, and that it muſt be, before you are *new creatures*, and are in CHRIST; and if you have not an intereſt in CHRIST, you are loſt, your damnation is haſtening on. "He that believeth ſhall be ſaved, and he that believeth not ſhall be damned."

If you ſtand out againſt CHRIST, you are fighting againſt yourſelves. O come unto him, do not ſtay to bring good works with you, for they will be of no ſervice; all your works will never carry you to heaven, they will never pardon one ſin, nor give you the leaſt comfort in a dying hour; if you have nothing more than your own works to recommend you to GOD, they will not prevent your ſinking into that eternal abyſs, where there is no bottom.

But come unto CHRIST, and he will give you that righteouſneſs which will ſtand you in good account at the great day of the LORD, when he ſhall come to take notice of them that love him, and of thoſe who have the wedding garment on.

Let all your actions ſpring from the love of JESUS; let him be the Alpha and Omega of all your actions; then, my brethren, our indifferent ones are acceptable ſacrifices; but if this principle be wanting, our moſt pompous ſervices avail nothing; we are only ſpiritual idolaters; we ſacrifice to our own net, and make an idol of ourſelves, by making ourſelves,

and

and not CHRIST, the ſpring of our actions; and therefore, my brethren, ſuch actions are ſo far from being accepted by GOD, that according to the language of one of the articles of our church, "We doubt not but that they have the nature of ſin, becauſe they ſpring not from an experimental faith in, and knowledge of JESUS CHRIST.

Were we not fallen creatures, we might then act upon other principles; but ſince we are fallen in *Adam*, and are reſtored again only by the death of JESUS CHRIST, the face of things is intirely changed, and all we think, ſpeak, or do, is only accepted in and through him.

Therefore, my brethren, I beſeech you, in the bowels of love and compaſſion, that you would come unto JESUS: Do not go away ſcoffing, offended, or blaſpheming. Indeed, all I ſay is in love to your ſouls; and if I could be but an inſtrument of bringing you to JESUS CHRIST, if you were to be never ſo much exalted, I ſhould not envy, but rejoice in your happineſs: If I was to make up the laſt of the train of the companions of the bleſſed JESUS, it would rejoice me to ſee you above me in glory. I do not ſpeak out of a falſe humility, a pretended ſanctity; no, GOD is my judge, I ſpeak the truth in CHRIST, I lie not, I would willingly go to priſon, or to death for you, ſo I could but bring one ſoul from the devil's ſtrong holds, into the ſalvation which is by CHRIST JESUS.

Come then unto CHRIST every one that hears me this night; I offer JESUS CHRIST, pardon, and ſalvation to all you, who will accept thereof. Come, O ye drunkards, lay aſide your cups, drink no more to exceſs; come and drink of the water which CHRIST will give you, and then you will thirſt no more: come, O ye thieves; let him that has ſtolen, ſteal no more, but fly unto CHRIST and he will receive you. Come unto him, O ye harlots; lay aſide your luſts and turn unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon you, he will cleanſe you of all your ſins, and waſh you in his blood.

Come,

Come, all ye liars; come, all ye Phariſees; come, all ye fornicators, adulterers, ſwearers, and blaſphemers, come to CHRIST, and he will take away all your filth, he will cleanſe you from your pollution, and your ſins ſhall be done away. Come, come, my guilty brethren; I beſeech you for CHRIST's ſake, and for your immortal ſoul's ſake, to come unto CHRIST: Do not let me knock at the door of your hearts in vain, but open and let the King of Glory in, and he will dwell with you, he will come and ſup with you this night; this hour, this moment he is ready to receive you, therefore come unto him.

Do not conſult with fleſh and blood, let not the world hinder you from coming to the LORD of life: What are a few tranſitory pleaſures of this life worth? They are not worth your having, but JESUS CHRIST is a pearl of great price, he is worth the laying out all you have, to buy.

And if you are under afflictions, fly not to company to divert you, neither read what the world calls harmleſs books; they only tend to harden the heart, and to keep you from cloſing with the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

When I was a child, yea, when I came to riper years, GOD knows, it is with grief I ſpeak it, when ignorant of the excellency of the word of GOD, I read as many of theſe harmleſs books as any one; but now I have taſted the good word of life, and am come to a more perfect knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD; I put away theſe childiſh, trifling things, and am determined to read no other books but what lead me to a knowledge of myſelf, and JESUS CHRIST.

Methinks I could ſpeak till midnight unto you, my brethren; I am full of love towards you; let me beſeech you to fly to CHRIST for ſuccour: "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of ſalvation;" therefore delay not, but ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait gate; do not go the broad way of the polite world, but chooſe to ſuffer affliction with the people

people of GOD, rather than to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon: You will have a reward afterwards, that will make amends for all the taunts, jeers, and calamities you may undergo here.

And will not the preſence of CHRIST be a ſufficient reward for all you have ſuffered for his name's ſake? Why will you not accept of the LORD of glory? Do not ſay you have not heard of CHRIST, for he is now offered to you, and you will not accept of him; do not blame my maſter, he is willing to ſave you, if you will but lay hold on him by faith; and if you do not, your blood will be required of your own heads.

But I hope that you will not let the blood of JESUS be ſhed in vain, and that you will not let my preaching be of no ſignification. Would you have me go and tell my maſter, you will not come, and that I have ſpent my ſtrength in vain; I cannot bear to carry ſo unpleaſing a meſſage unto him, I would not, indeed, I would not be a ſwift witneſs againſt any of you at the great day of accounts; but if you will refuſe theſe gracious invitations, and not accept of them, I muſt do it: and will it not move your tender hearts to ſee your friends taken up into heaven, and you yourſelves thruſt down into hell? But I hope better things of moſt of you, even that you will turn unto the LORD of love, the JESUS who died for you, that in the day when he ſhall come to take his people to the manſions of everlaſting reſt, you may hear his voice, "Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, enter into the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world." And that we may all enter into that glory, do thou, O JESUS, prepare us, by thy grace; give us thy ſpirit; and may our hearts be united to thee: May the word that has now been ſpoken, take deep root in thy people's hearts, that it may ſpring up and bring forth fruit, in ſome thirty, in ſome forty, and in ſome an hundred fold; do thou preſerve them while in this life from all evil, and keep them from falling, and at laſt preſent them faultleſs before thy Father, when thou comeſt to judge the world, that where thou art, they may be

be alſo. Grant this, O LORD JESUS CHRIST, with whatever elſe thou ſeeſt needful for us, both at this time and for evermore.

Now to GOD the Father, GOD the Son, and GOD the Holy Ghoſt, be aſcribed all honour, power, glory, might, majeſty and dominion, both now and for evermore, Amen.

SERMON

SERMON LII.

The heinous Sin of Drunkenneſs.

EPHESIANS v. 18.

: not drunk with Wine, wherein is Exceſs; but be filled with the Spirit.

THE perſons to whom theſe words were written, were the inhabitants of *Epheſus*, as we are told in the *Acts*, d been worſhipppers of the great goddeſs *Diana*, and, in probability, worſhipped the God *Bacchus* alſo; at the cele- ation of whoſe feſtivals, it was always cuſtomary, nay, part their religion, to get drunk; as though there was no other ıy to pleaſe their God, but by turning themſelves into utes.

The apoſtle therefore in this chapter, amongſt many other ecepts more eſpecially applicable to them, lays down this the text; and exhorts them, as they had now, by the free ace of GOD, been turned from heatheniſh darkneſs to the ;ht of the goſpel, to walk as children of light, and no longer ake it part of their religion or practice to be "drunk with ne, wherein is exceſs;" but, on the contrary, ſtrive to be filled with the Spirit" of that Saviour, after whoſe name ey were called, and whoſe religion taught them to abſtain m a filthy ſin, and to live ſoberly as they ought to live.

The world being now chriſtian, and the doctrines of the ſpel every where received, one would imagine, there ſhould no reaſon for repeating the precept now before us. But alas,

alas, chriſtians! I mean chriſtians falſely ſo called, are led captive by all ſin in general, and by this of drunkenneſs in particular; that was St. *Paul* to riſe again from the dead, he might be tempted to think moſt of us were turned back to the worſhip of dumb idols; had ſet up temples in honour of *Bacchus*; and made it part of our religion, as the *Epheſians* did of theirs, "to be drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs."

Some of our civil magiſtrates have not been wanting to uſe the power given them from above, for the puniſhment and reſtraint of ſuch evil doings; and I wiſh it could be ſaid this plague of drinking, by what they have done, had been ſtayed amongſt us. But alas! though their labour, we truſt, has not been altogether in vain in the LORD, yet thouſands, and I could almoſt ſay ten thouſands, fall daily at our right-hand, by this ſin of drunkenneſs, in our ſtreets; nay, men ſeem to have made a covenant with hell, and though the power of the civil magiſtrate is exerted againſt them, nay, though they cannot but daily ſee the companions of their riot hourly, by this ſin, brought to the grave, yet "they will riſe up early to follow ſtrong drink, and cry, To-morrow ſhall be as to-day, and ſo much the more abundantly; when we awake, we will ſeek it yet again."

It is high time therefore, for thy miniſters, O GOD, to lift up their voices like a trumpet; and ſince human threats cannot prevail, to ſet before them the terrors of the LORD, and try if theſe will not perſuade them to ceaſe from the evil of their doings.

But alas! how ſhall I addreſs myſelf to them? I fear exceſs of drinking has made them ſuch mere *Nabals*, that there is no ſpeaking to them. And many of GOD's ſervants have toiled all their life-time in diſſuading them from this ſin of drunkenneſs, yet they will not forbear. However, at thy command, I will ſpeak alſo, though they be a rebellious houſe. Magnify thy ſtrength, O LORD, in my weakneſs, and grant that I may ſpeak with ſuch demonſtration of the Spirit, and power, that

that from henceforward they may ceaſe to act ſo unwiſely, and this ſin of drunkenneſs may not be their ruin.

Believe me, ye unhappy men of *Belial*, (for ſuch, alas! this ſin has made you) it is not without the ſtrongeſt reaſons, as well as utmoſt concern for your precious and immortal ſouls, that I now conjure you, in the Apoſtle's words, "Not to be drunk with wine, or any other liquor, wherein is exceſs." For,

Firſt, Drunkenneſs is a ſin which muſt be highly diſpleaſing to GOD; becauſe it is an abuſe of his good creatures.

When GOD firſt made man, and had breathed into him the breath of life, he gave him dominion over the works of his hands; and every herb bearing ſeed, and every tree, in which was the fruit of a tree yielding ſeed, to him was given for meat: but when *Adam* had taſted the forbidden fruit, which was the only reſtraint laid upon him, he forfeited this privilege, and had no right, after he had diſobeyed his Creator, to the uſe of any one of the creatures.

But, bleſſed be GOD, this charter, as well as all other privileges, is reſtored to us by the death of the ſecond *Adam*, our LORD and Maſter JESUS CHRIST. Of every beaſt of the field, every fiſh of the ſea, and whatſoever flieth in the air, or moveth on the face of the earth, that is fit for food, "we may freely eat," without ſcruple take and eat; but then, with this limitation, that we uſe them moderately. For GOD, by the death of JESUS, has given no man licenſe to be intemperate; but, on the contrary, has laid us under the ſtrongeſt obligations to live ſoberly, as well as godly, in this preſent world.

But the drunkard, deſpiſing the goodneſs and bounty of GOD, in reſtoring to us what we had ſo juſtly forfeited, turns his grace into wantonneſs; and as though the creature was not of itſelf enough ſubject to vanity, by being curſed for our ſake, he abuſes it ſtill more, by making it adminiſter to his

luſts; and turns that wine which was intended to make glad his heart, into a deadly poiſon.

But thinkeſt thou, O drunkard, whoſoever thou art, thou ſhalt eſcape the righteous judgment of GOD? No, the time will ſhortly come that thou muſt be no longer ſteward, and then the Sovereign LORD of all the earth will reckon with thee for thus waſting his goods. Alas! wilt thou then wreſt ſcripture any longer to thy own damnation? And becauſe JESUS CHRIST turned water into wine at the marriage-feaſt, to ſupply the wants of his indigent hoſt, ſay, that it is therefore meet to make merry, and be drunken. No, thou ſhalt be ſilent before him; and know, that though thou haſt encouraged thyſelf in drunkenneſs by ſuch-like arguments, yet for all theſe things GOD will bring thee into judgment. But,

Secondly, What makes drunkenneſs more exceedingly ſinful, is, that a man, by falling into it, ſinneth againſt his own body.

When the apoſtle would diſſuade the *Corinthians* from fornication, he urges this as an argument, "Flee fornication, brethren; for he that committeth fornication, ſinneth againſt his own body." And may not I as juſtly cry out, Flee drunkenneſs, my brethren, ſince he that committeth that crime, ſinneth againſt his own body? For, from whence come ſo many diſeaſes and diſtempers in your bodies? Come they not from hence, even from your intemperance in drinking? Who hath pains in the head? Who hath rottenneſs in the bones? Who hath redneſs of eyes? He that tarries long at the wine, he that riſes early to ſeek new wine. How many walking ſkeletons have you ſeen, whoſe bodies were once exceeding fair to look upon, fat and well-favoured; but, by this ſin of drinking, how has their beauty departed from them, and how have they been permitted to walk to and fro upon the earth, as though GOD intended to ſet them up, as he did *Lot*'s wife, for monuments of his juſtice, that others might learn not to get drunk? Nay, I appeal to yourſelves: are not many, for this

this cauſe, even now ſickly among you? And have not many of your companions, whom you once ſaw ſo flouriſhing, like green bay trees, been brought by it with ſorrow to their graves?

We might, perhaps, think ourſelves hardly dealt with by GOD, was he to ſend us, as he did the royal Pſalmiſt, to chooſe one plague out of three, whereby we ſhould be deſtroyed. But had the Almighty decreed to cut off man from the face of the earth, and to ſhorten his days, he could not well ſend a more effectual plague, than to permit men, as they pleaſed, to over-charge themſelves with drunkenneſs; for though it be a ſlow, yet it is a certain poiſon. And if the ſword has ſlain its thouſands, drunkenneſs has ſlain its ten thouſands.

And will not this alarm you, O ye tranſgreſſors? Will not this perſuade you to ſpare yourſelves, and to do your bodies no harm? What, have you loſt the firſt principles of human nature, the fundamental law of ſelf-preſervation? You ſeem to have a great fondneſs for your bodies; why, otherwiſe, to gratify the inordinate appetites, do you drink to exceſs? But ſurely, if you truly loved them, you would not thus deſtroy them; and was there no other argument to be urged againſt drunkenneſs, the conſideration that it will deſtroy thoſe lives you are ſo fond of, one would imagine, ſhould be ſufficient.

I know, indeed, that it is a common anſwer, which drunkards make to thoſe, who, out of love, would pull them as firebrands out of the fire, we are no body's enemy but our own. But this, inſtead of being an excuſe for, is an aggravation of their guilt: for (not to mention that the drunkenneſs of one man has cloathed many a family with rags, and that it is ſcarce poſſible for a perſon to be drunk, without tempting his neighbour alſo) not to mention theſe, and many other ill conſequences, which would prove ſuch an excuſe to be entirely falſe: yet what is dearer to a man than himſelf? And if he himſelf be loſt, what would all the whole world avail him? But how wilt thou ſtand, O man, before the

judgment-ſeat of CHRIST, and make ſuch an excuſe, when thou ſhalt be arraigned before him as a ſelf-murderer? Will it then be ſufficient, thinkeſt thou, to ſay, I was no man's enemy but my own? No; GOD will then tell thee, that thou oughteſt to have glorified him with thy ſpirit, and with thy body, which were his; and ſince thou haſt, by intemperance, deſtroyed thy body, he will deſtroy both thy body and ſoul in hell. But,

Thirdly, What renders drunkenneſs more inexcuſable, is, that it robs a man of his reaſon.

Reaſon is the glory of a man; the chief thing whereby GOD has made us to differ from the brute creation. And our modern unbelievers have exalted it to ſuch a high degree, as even to ſet it in oppoſition to revelation, and ſo deny the LORD that bought them. But though, in doing this, they greatly err, and whilſt they profeſs themſelves wiſe, become real fools; yet we muſt acknowledge, that reaſon is the candle of the LORD, and whoſoever puts it out, ſhall bear his puniſhment, whoſoever he be.

But yet, this the drunkard does. *Nebuchadnezzar*'s curſe he makes his choice, his reaſon departeth from him; and then what is he better than a brute?

The very heathen kings were ſo ſenſible of this, that, in order to deter their young princes from drinking, they uſed to make their ſlaves get drunk, and be expoſed before them. And didſt thou but ſee thine own picture, O drunkard, when, after having drowned thy reaſon, thou ſtaggereſt to and fro, like one of the fools in *Iſrael*, and ſeeſt thy very companions making ſongs upon thee, ſurely thou wouldſt not return to thy vomit again, but abhor thyſelf in duſt and aſhes!

When *David*, in a holy ecſtacy, was dancing before the ark, *Michal*, *Saul*'s daughter, deſpiſed him in her heart; and when he came home, ſhe ſaid, "How glorious was the king of *Iſrael* to-day, who uncovered himſelf to-day in the eyes of the

the hand-maids of his ſervants, as one of the vain fellows ſhameleſly uncovereth himſelf." But may not every one that meets a drunkard, more juſtly ſay, How glorious does he, that was made a little lower than the angels, look to-day, when, unmindful of his dignity, he has by drinking robbed himſelf of his reaſon, and reduced himſelf to a level with the beaſts that periſh.

But what if GOD, in the midſt of one of theſe drunken fits, ſhould arreſt thee by death, and ſay unto thee, "Thou fool, this moment ſhall thy ſoul be required of thee." O! how wouldſt thou appear in thoſe filthy garments before that GOD, in whoſe ſight the heavens are not clean. And how knoweſt thou, O man, but this may be thy lot? Haſt thou not known many ſummoned at ſuch an unguarded hour? and what aſſurance haſt thou, that thou ſhalt not be the next? Becauſe GOD has forborn thee ſo long, thinkeſt thou he will forbear always? No, this is rather a ſign that he will come at an hour thou lookeſt not for him; and ſince his goodneſs and long-ſuffering has not led thee to repentance, he will cut thee down, and not permit thee to cumber the ground any longer. Conſider this then, all ye that count it a pleaſure to turn yourſelves into brutes, leſt GOD pluck you away by a ſudden death, and there be none to deliver you.

Fourthly, There is a farther aggravation of this crime, that it is an inlet to, and forerunner of many other ſins; for it ſeldom comes alone.

We may ſay of drunkenneſs, as *Solomon* does of ſtrife, that it is like the letting out of water; for we know not what will be the end thereof. Its name is *Legion*; behold a troop of ſins cometh after it. And, for my own part, when I ſee a drunkard, with the holy Prophet, when he looked in *Hazael*'s face, I can hardly forbear weeping, to conſider how many vices he may fall into, ere he comes to himſelf again.

What horrid inceſt did righteous *Lot* commit with his own daughters, when they had made him drunk? And, I doubt

not, but there are many amongſt you, who have committed ſuch crimes when you have deprived yourſelves of your reaſon by drinking, that were you to hear of them, your heart, like *Nabal*'s, after he was told how he had abuſed *David* when he was drunk, would die within you. And, had any one told you, when you were ſober, that you would have been guilty of ſuch crimes, you would have cried out, with *Hazael* before-mentioned, "Are thy ſervants ſo many dogs, that they ſhould do thus?"

But no marvel that drunkards commit ſuch crimes; for drunkenneſs drives the Holy Spirit from them; they become mere machines for the devil to work up to what he pleaſes; he enters into them, as he entered into the herd of ſwine; and no wonder if they then commit all uncleanneſs, and any other crime, with greedineſs. But this leads me to a

Fifth conſideration, which highly aggravates the ſin of drunkenneſs, it ſeparates the Holy Spirit from us.

It is to be hoped, that no one here preſent need be informed, that before we can be aſſured we are chriſtians indeed, we muſt receive the Holy Ghoſt, muſt be born again from above, and have the Spirit of GOD witneſſing with our ſpirits, that we are the ſons of GOD. This, this alone is true chriſtianity; and without the cohabitation of this bleſſed Spirit in our hearts, our righteouſneſs does not exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, and we ſhall in no wiſe enter into the kingdom of GOD.

But now, drunkards do in effect bid this bleſſed Spirit to depart from them: for what has he to do with ſuch filthy ſwine? They have no lot or ſhare in the Spirit of the Son of *David*. They have chaſed him out of their hearts, by defiling his temple; I mean their bodies. And he can no more hold communion with them, than light can have communion with darkneſs, or CHRIST have concord with *Belial*.

The

The apoſtle, therefore, in the words of the text, exhorts the *Epheſians*, "not to be drunk with wine, wherein is exceſs, but to be filled with the Spirit;" thereby implying, that drunkenneſs and the Spirit of GOD could never dwell in the ſame heart. And in another epiſtle, he bids them to avoid unprofitable converſation, as a thing which grieved the Holy Spirit: whereby alone they could be ſealed to the day of redemption. And if unprofitable converſation grieves the Holy Spirit, at what an infinite diſtance muſt drunkenneſs drive him from the hearts of men?

O that you were wiſe! that you would conſider what a dreadful thing it is to have the Spirit of the living GOD depart from you! for, aſſure yourſelves, if you live without him, you will live without GOD in the world. You are in the ſame miſerable forlorn condition as *Saul* was, when an evil ſpirit of the LORD came upon him; and you are only ſo many veſſels of wrath fitted for deſtruction. But this brings me to a

Sixth reaſon againſt the ſin of drunkenneſs; it abſolutely unfits a man for the enjoyment of GOD in heaven, and expoſes him to his eternal wrath.

To ſee and enjoy GOD, and to be like the bleſſed angels, always beholding the face of our heavenly Father, in the glories of his kingdom, is ſuch an unſpeakable happineſs, that even wicked men, though they will not live the life of the righteous, cannot but wiſh their future ſtate to be like his.

But think you, O ye drunkards, that you ſhall ever be partakers of this inheritance with the ſaints in light? Do you flatter yourſelves, that you, who have made them often the ſubject of your drunken ſongs, ſhall now be exalted to ſing with them the heavenly ſongs of *Sion*? No, as by drunkenneſs you have made your hearts cages of unclean birds, with impure and unclean ſpirits muſt you dwell.

A burning *Tophet*, kindled by GOD's wrath, is prepared for your reception, where you muſt ſuffer the vengeance of eternal fire, and in vain cry out for a drop of water to cool your tongues. Indeed you ſhall drink, but it ſhall be a cup of GOD's fury: for in the hand of the LORD there will be a cup of fury, it will be full mixed; and as for the dregs thereof, all the drunkards of the land ſhall ſuck them out.

But perhaps you may not believe this report. Theſe words may be looked upon by you as idle tales, and I may ſeem to you as *Lot* did to his ſons-in-law, when he came to warn them to get up out of *Sodom*, "as one that mocketh." But if you believe not me, believe eternal truth itſelf, which has poſitively declared, that no drunkard ſhall ever enter into his kingdom.

And I call heaven and earth to witneſs againſt you this day, that as ſurely as the LORD rained fire and brimſtone, as ſoon as *Lot* went out of *Sodom*, ſo ſurely will GOD caſt you into a lake of fire and brimſtone, when he ſhall come to take vengeance on them that know not GOD, and have not obeyed the goſpel of our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Behold then I have told you before; remember, that you this day were informed what the end of drunkenneſs would be. And I ſummon you, in the name of that GOD whom I ſerve, to meet me at the judgment-ſeat of CHRIST, that you may acquit both my Maſter and me; and confeſs, with your own mouths, that your damnation was of yourſelves, and that we are free from the blood of you all.

But, LORD, has no one believed our report? Wilt thou ſuffer ſo many words to be ſpoken in vain, if it be yet in vain? No, methinks I ſee ſome pricked to the heart, and ready to cry out, in the language of *David* to *Abigail*, "Bleſſed be the LORD GOD of *Iſrael*, which ſent thee this day to ſpeak unto us." For ſurely, unleſs he had ſent thee, this ſin of drunkenneſs had been our ruin: but now, ſince we find whi-

ther it will lead us, we are reſolved to drink no liquor to exceſs while the world ſtands, leſt we ſhould be tormented in the flames of hell.

But alas! how ſhall we be delivered from the power of this ſin? Can the *Ethiopian* change his ſkin, or the leopard his ſpots? So hard, almoſt, will it be for you who have been accuſtomed to be intemperate, to learn to live ſober.

But do not deſpair; for what is impoſſible with man, is poſſible with GOD. Of whom then ſhould you ſeek for ſuccour, but of him your LORD? Who, though for this ſin of drunkenneſs, he might juſtly turn away his face from you; yet obſerve,

Firſt, If you pour out your hearts before him in *daily prayer*, and aſk aſſiſtance from above, it may be GOD will endue you with power from on high, and make you more than conquerors through JESUS CHRIST. Had you kept up communion with him in prayer, you would not ſo long, by drunkenneſs, have had communion with devils. But, like the Prodigal, you have deſired to be your own maſters; you have lived without prayer, depended on your own ſtrength; and now ſee, alas! on what a broken reed you have leaned. How ſoon have you made yourſelves like the beaſts that have no underſtanding? But turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways. Come to him with the repenting Prodigal, ſaying, "Father we have ſinned;" we beſeech thee, let not this ſin of drunkenneſs have any longer dominion over us. Lay hold on CHRIST by faith, and lo! it ſhall happen to you even as you will. A

Second means I would recommend to you, in order to get the better of drunkenneſs, is to *avoid evil company*: For it is the evil communication of wicked men, that has drawn many thouſands into this ſin, and ſo corrupted their good manners.

But you may ſay, If I leave my companions, I muſt expect contempt: for they will certainly deſpiſe me for being ſingular.

lar. And thinkeſt thou, O man, ever to enter in at the ſtrait gate by a true converſion, without being had in deriſion of them that are round about thee? No; though thou mayſt be deſpiſed, and not go to heaven, yet thou canſt not go to heaven without being deſpiſed: "For the friendſhip of the world is enmity with GOD." And they that are born after the fleſh, will perſecute thoſe that are born after the Spirit. Let not, therefore, a ſervile fear of being deſpiſed by a man that ſhall die, hinder thy turning unto the living GOD. For what is a little contempt? It is but a vapour which vaniſheth away, and cometh not again. Better be derided by a few companions here, than be made aſhamed before men and angels hereafter. Better be the ſong of a few drunkards on earth, than dwell with them, where they will be eternally reproaching and curſing each other in hell. Yet a little while, and they themſelves ſhall praiſe thy doings, and ſhall ſay, We, fools, counted his leaving us to be folly, and his end to be without honour: but how is he numbered among the ſons of of GOD, and his lot among the ſaints!

But I haſten to lay down a

Third means for thoſe who would overcome the ſin of drunkenneſs, to enter upon a life of *ſtrict ſelf-denial* and mortification: for this kind of ſin goeth not forth but by prayer and faſting. It is true, this may ſeem a difficult taſk; but then, we muſt thank ourſelves for it; for had we begun ſooner, our work would have been the eaſier. And even now, if you will but ſtrive, the yoke of mortification will grow lighter and lighter every day.

And now, by way of concluſion, I cannot but exhort all perſons, high and low, rich and poor, to practiſe a ſtrict ſelf-denial in eating and drinking. For though "the kingdom of GOD conſiſts not in meats and drinks," yet an abſtemious uſe of GOD's good creatures, greatly promotes the ſpiritual life. And perhaps there are more deſtroyed by living in a regular ſenſuality, than even by the very ſin I have now been warning

warning you of. I know indeed, that many, who are only almoſt chriſtians, and who ſeek, but do not ſtrive to enter into the kingdom of GOD, urge a text of ſcripture to juſtify their indulgence, ſaying, that "it is not what entereth into the man defileth the man." And ſo we grant, when taken moderately; but then they ſhould conſider, that it is poſſible, nay, it is proved by daily experience, that a perſon may eat and drink ſo much as not to hurt his body, and yet do infinite prejudice to his ſoul: for ſelf-indulgence lulls the ſoul into a ſpiritual ſlumber, as well as direct intemperance; and though the latter may expoſe us to more contempt among men, yet the former, if continued in, will as certainly ſhut us out from the preſence of GOD. St. *Paul* knew this full well; and therefore, though he was the ſpiritual father of thouſands, and was near upon finiſhing his courſe, yet he ſays, it was his daily practice to "keep his body under, and bring it into ſubjection, leſt after he had preached to others, he himſelf ſhould be a caſt-away," or diſapproved of, or do ſomething that might make him an offence or ſtumbling-block to any of GOD's children: for of his own, and all other ſaints final perſeverance, he makes no doubt, as is evident from many of his epiſtles; and the word Αδοκιμος bears this ſenſe, 2 *Cor.* xiii. 5. and ſundry other places. But why urge I the apoſtle's example, to excite you to a ſtrict temperance in eating and drinking? Rather let me exhort you only to put in practice the latter part of the text, to labour to "be filled with the Spirit of GOD," and then you will no longer ſearch the ſcriptures to find arguments for ſelf-indulgence; but you will deal ſincerely with yourſelves, and eat and drink no more at any time, than what is conſiſtent with the ſtricteſt precepts of the goſpel. O beg of GOD, that you may ſee, how you are fallen in *Adam*, and the neceſſity of being renewed, ere you can be happy, by the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST! Let us beſeech him to enlighten us to ſee the treachery of our corrupt hearts, and how pure and holy theſe bodies ought to be, that they ought to be living temples of the Holy Ghoſt, and then we ſhall ſhew ourſelves men. And being made temples of the Holy Ghoſt, by his dwelling in our

bodies

bodies here, though after death, worms may deſtroy them, yet ſhall they be raiſed by the ſame Spirit at the general reſurrection of the laſt day, to be faſhioned like unto CHRIST's glorious body hereafter.

Which GOD of his infinite mercy grant, &c.

SERMON

SERMON LIII.

The Power of CHRIST's Reſurrection.

PHILIP. iii. 10.

That I may know Him, and the Power of his Reſurrection.

THE apoſtle, in the verſes before the text, had been cautioning the *Philippians* to "beware of the conciſion," *Judaizing teachers*, who endeavoured to ſubvert them from the ſimplicity of the goſpel, by telling them, they ſtill ought to be ſubject to circumciſion, and all the other ordinances of *Moſes*. And that they might not think he ſpoke out of prejudice, and condemned their tenets, becauſe he himſelf was a ſtranger to the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation, he acquaints them, that if any other man thought he had whereof he might truſt in the fleſh, or ſeek to be juſtified by the outward privileges of the *Jews*, he had more: For he was "circumciſed the eighth day; of the ſtock of *Iſrael* (not a proſelyte, but a native *Iſraelite*); of the tribe of *Benjamin* (the tribe which adhered to *Judah* when the others revolted); an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews* (a *Jew* both on the father's and mother's ſide); and as touching the law, a *Phariſee*," the ſtricteſt ſect amongſt all *Iſrael*. To ſhew that he was no *Gallio* in religion, through his great, though miſguided zeal, he had perſecuted the church of CHRIST; and "as touching the righteouſneſs of the law (as far as the *Phariſees* expoſition of it went, he was) blameleſs," and had kept it from his youth. But, when it pleaſed GOD, who ſeparated him from his mother's womb, to reveal his Son in him, "What things were gain to me," (he ſays) thoſe privileges I boaſted myſelf in, and ſought to be

be juſtified by, "I counted loſs for CHRIST." And that they might not think he repented that he had done ſo, he tells them, he was now more confirmed than ever in his judgment. For, ſays he, "yea doubtleſs (the expreſſion in the original riſes with a holy triumph) and I do count all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS my LORD." And that they might not object that he ſaid, and did not, he acquaints them, he had given proofs of the ſincerity of theſe profeſſions, becauſe for the ſake of them, he had ſuffered the loſs of all his worldly things, and ſtill was willing to do more; for, "I count them but dung (no more than offals thrown out to dogs) ſo that I may win, (or have a ſaving intereſt in) CHRIST, and be found in him (as the manſlayer in the city of refuge) not having my own righteouſneſs which is of the law, (not depending on having *Abraham* for my father, or on any works of righteouſneſs which I have done, either to atone or ſerve as a balance for my evil deeds) but that which is through the faith of CHRIST, the righteouſneſs which is of GOD by faith," a righteouſneſs of GOD's appointing, and which will be imputed to me, if I believe in CHRIST, "that I may know him, and the power of his reſurrection;" that I may have an experimental knowledge of the efficacy of his reſurrection, by feeling the influences of his bleſſed Spirit on my ſoul. In which words two things are implied.

Firſt, That JESUS CHRIST did riſe from the dead.

Secondly, That it highly concerns us to know the power of his riſing again.

Accordingly, in the following diſcourſe I ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

Firſt, That CHRIST is riſen indeed from the dead; and that it was neceſſary for him ſo to do; and,

Secondly, That it highly concerns us to know and experience the power of his reſurrection.

Firſt, CHRIST is indeed riſen.

That JESUS ſhould riſe from the dead was abſolutely neceſſary;

1. *Firſt*, On his own account. He had often appealed to this as the laſt and moſt convincing proof he would give them that he was the true Meſſiah, "There ſhall no other ſign be given you, than the ſign of the prophet *Jonas*." And again, "Deſtroy this temple of my body, and in three days I will build it up." Which words his enemies remembered, and urged it as an argument, to induce *Pilate* to grant them a watch, to prevent his being ſtolen out of the grave. "We know that deceiver ſaid, whilſt he was yet alive, after three days I will riſe again." So that had he not riſen again, they might have juſtly ſaid, we know that this man was an impoſtor.

2. *Secondly*, It was neceſſary on our account. "He roſe again" (ſays the apoſtle) for our juſtification;" or that the debt we owed to GOD for our ſins, might be fully ſatisfied and diſcharged.

It had pleaſed the Father (for ever adored be his infinite love and free grace) to wound his only Son for our tranſgreſſions, and to arreſt and confine him in the priſon of the grave, as our ſurety for the guilt we had contracted by ſetting at nought his commandments. Now had CHRIST continued always in the grave, we could have had no more aſſurance that our ſins were ſatisfied for, than any common debtor can have of his creditor's being ſatisfied, whilſt his ſurety is kept confined. But he being releaſed from the power of death, we are thereby aſſured, that with his ſacrifice GOD was well pleaſed, that our atonement was finiſhed on the croſs, and that he hath made a full, perfect, and ſufficient ſacrifice, oblation, and ſatisfaction for the ſins of the world.

3. *Thirdly*,

3. *Thirdly*, It was neceſſary that our LORD JESUS ſhould riſe again from the dead, to aſſure us of the certainty of the reſurrection of our own bodies.

The doctrine of the reſurrection of the body was entirely exploded and ſet at nought among the *Gentiles*, as appears from the *Athenians* mocking at, and calling St. *Paul* "a babbler and a ſetter forth of ſtrange doctrines," when he preached to them JESUS, and the reſurrection. And though it was believed by moſt of the *Jews*, as is evident from many paſſages of ſcripture, yet not by all; the whole ſect of the Sadducees denied it. But the reſurrection of JESUS CHRIST put it out of diſpute. For as he acted as our repreſentative, if he our head be riſen, then muſt we alſo, who are his members, riſe with him. And as in the firſt *Adam* we all died, even ſo in him our ſecond *Adam* we muſt all, in this ſenſe, be made alive.

As it was neceſſary, upon theſe accounts, that our bleſſed LORD ſhould riſe from the dead; ſo it is plain beyond contradiction, that he did. Never was any matter of fact better atteſted; never were more precautions made uſe of to prevent a cheat. He was buried in a ſepulchre, hewn out of a rock, ſo that it could not be ſaid that any digged under, and conveyed him away. It was a ſepulchre alſo wherein never man before was laid; ſo that if any body did riſe from thence, it muſt be the body of JESUS of *Nazareth*. Beſides, the ſepulchre was ſealed; a great ſtone rolled over the mouth of it; and a band of ſoldiers (conſiſting not of friends, but of his profeſſed enemies) was ſet to guard it. And as for his diſciples coming by night and ſtealing him away, it was altogether improbable: For it was not long ſince, that they had all forſaken him, and they were the moſt backward in believing his reſurrection. And ſuppoſing it was true, that they came whilſt the ſoldiers ſlept; yet the ſoldiers muſt be caſt into a deep ſleep indeed, that the rolling away ſo great a ſtone did not awake ſome of them.

And

And our bleſſed LORD's afterwards appearing at ſundry times, and in divers manners, to his diſciples, as when they were aſſembled together, when they were walking to *Emmaus*, when they were fiſhing; nay, and condeſcending to ſhew them his hands and feet, and his appearing to above five hundred brethren at once, put the truth of his reſurrection out of all diſpute.

Indeed, there is one objection that may be made againſt what has been ſaid, that the books wherein theſe facts are recorded were written by his diſciples.

And who more proper perſons than thoſe who were eye-witneſſes of what they related, and eat and drank with him after his reſurrection? "But they were illiterate and ignorant men." Yet as good witneſſes of a plain matter of fact, as the moſt learned maſters in *Iſrael*. Nay, this rendered them more proper witneſſes. For being plain men, they were therefore leſs to be ſuſpected of telling or making a lye, particularly, ſince they laid down their lives for a teſtimony of the truth of it. We read indeed of *Jacob*'s telling a lie, though he was a plain man, in order to get his father's bleſſing. But it was never heard ſince the world began, that any man, much leſs a whole ſet of men, died martyrs, for the ſake of an untruth, when they themſelves were to reap no advantage from it.

No, this ſingle circumſtance proves them to be *Iſraelites* indeed, in whom was no guile. And the wonderful ſucceſs GOD gave to their miniſtry afterwards, when three thouſand were converted by one ſermon; and twelve poor fiſhermen, in a very ſhort time enabled to be more than conquerors over all the oppoſition men or devils could make, was as plain a demonſtration, that CHRIST was riſen, according to their goſpel, as that a divine power, at the ſound of a few ram's horns, cauſed the walls of *Jericho* to fall down.

But what need we any farther witneſſes? Believe you the reſurrection of our bleſſed LORD? I know that you believe it,

it, as your gathering together on this firſt day of the week in the courts of the LORD's houſe abundantly teſtifies.

What concerns us moſt to be aſſured of, and which is the

Second thing I was to ſpeak to, is, Whether we have experimentally known the power of his reſurrection; that is, Whether or not we have received the Holy Ghoſt, and by his powerful operations on our hearts have been raiſed from the death of ſin, to a life of righteouſneſs and true holineſs.

It was this, the great apoſtle was chiefly deſirous to know. The reſurrection of CHRIST's body he was ſatisfied would avail him nothing, unleſs he experienced the power of it in raiſing his dead ſoul.

For another, and that a chief end of our bleſſed LORD's riſing from the dead, was to enter heaven as our repreſentative, and to ſend down the Holy Ghoſt to apply that redemption he had finiſhed on the croſs, to our hearts, by working an entire change in them.

Without this, CHRIST would have died in vain. For it would have done us no ſervice to have had his outward righteouſneſs imputed to us, unleſs we had an inward inherent righteouſneſs wrought in us. Becauſe, being altogether conceived and born in ſin, and conſequently unfit to hold communion with an infinitely pure and holy GOD, we cannot poſſibly be made meet to ſee or enjoy him, till a thorough renovation has paſſed upon our hearts.

Without this, we leave out the Holy Ghoſt in the great work of our redemption. But as we were made by the joint concurrence and conſultation of the bleſſed trinity; and as we were baptized in their name, ſo muſt all of them concur in our ſalvation: As the Father made, and the Son redeemed,

ſo muſt the Holy Ghoſt ſanctify and ſeal us, or otherwiſe we have believed in vain.

This then is what the apoſtle means by the "Power of CHRIST's reſurrection," and this is what we are as much concerned experimentally to know, as that He roſe at all.

Without this, though we may be moraliſts, though we may be civilized, good-natured people, yet we are no chriſtians. For he is not a true chriſtian, who is only one outwardly; nor have we therefore a right, becauſe we daily profeſs to believe that CHRIST roſe again the third day from the dead. But he is a true chriſtian who is one inwardly; and then only can we be ſtiled true believers, when we not only profeſs to believe, but have felt the power of our bleſſed LORD's riſing from the dead, by being quickened and raiſed by his Spirit, when dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, to a thorough newneſs both of heart and life.

The devils themſelves cannot but believe the doctrine of the reſurrection, and tremble; but yet they continue devils, becauſe the benefits of this reſurrection have not been applied to them, nor have they received a renovating power from it, to change and put off their diabolical nature. And ſo, unleſs we not only profeſs to know, but alſo feel that CHRIST is riſen indeed, by being born again from above, we ſhall be as far from the kingdom of GOD as they: our faith will be as ineffectual as the faith of devils.

Nothing has done more harm to the chriſtian world, nothing has rendered the croſs of CHRIST of leſs effect, than a vain ſuppoſition, that religion is ſomething without us. Whereas we ſhould conſider, that every thing that CHRIST did outwardly, muſt be done over again in our ſouls; or otherwiſe, the believing there was ſuch a divine perſon once on earth, who triumphed over hell and the grave, will profit us no more, than believing there was once ſuch a perſon as *Alexander*, who conquered the world.

As CHRIST was born of the Virgin's womb, ſo muſt he be ſpiritually formed in our hearts. As he died for ſin, ſo muſt we die to ſin. And as he roſe again from the dead, ſo muſt we alſo riſe to a divine life.

None but thoſe who have followed him in this regeneration, or new-birth, ſhall ſit on thrones as approvers of his ſentence, when he ſhall come in terrible majeſty to judge the twelve tribes of *Iſrael*.

It is true, as for the outward work of our redemption, it was a tranſient act, and was certainly finiſhed on the croſs. but the application of that redemption to our hearts, is a work that will continue always, even unto the end of the world.

So long as there is an elect man breathing on the earth, who is naturally engendred of the offſpring of the firſt *Adam*, ſo long muſt the quickning ſpirit, which was purchaſed by the reſurrection of the ſecond *Adam*, that LORD from heaven, be breathing upon his ſoul.

For though we may exiſt by CHRIST, yet we cannot be ſaid to exiſt in him, till we are united to him by one ſpirit, and enter into a new ſtate of things, as certainly as he entered into a new ſtate of things, after that he roſe from the dead.

We may throng and crowd round about CHRIST, and call him "Lord, Lord," when we come to worſhip before his footſtool; but we have not effectually touched him, till by a lively faith in his reſurrection, we perceive a divine virtue coming out of him, to renew and purify our ſouls.

How greatly then do they err who reſt in a bare hiſtorical faith of our Saviour's reſurrection, and look only for external proofs to evidence it? Whereas were we the moſt learned diſputers of this world, and could ſpeak of the certainty of this

this fact with the tongue of men and angels, yet without this inward teſtimony of it in our hearts, though we might convince others, yet we ſhould never be ſaved by it ourſelves.

For we are but dead men, we are like ſo many carcaſes wrapt up in grave cloaths, till that ſame JESUS who called *Lazarus* from his tomb, and at whoſe own reſurrection many that ſlept aroſe, doth raiſe us alſo by his quickening Spirit from our natural death, in which we have ſo long lain, to a holy and heavenly life.

We might think ourſelves happy, if we had ſeen the Holy JESUS after He was riſen from the dead, and our hands had handled that LORD of life. But more happy are they who have not ſeen him, and yet having felt the power of his reſurrection, therefore believe in him. For many ſaw our divine maſter, who were not ſaved by him; but whoſoever has thus felt the power of his reſurrection, has the earneſt of his inheritance in his heart, he has paſſed from death to life, and ſhall never fall into final condemnation.

I am very ſenſible that this is fooliſhneſs to the natural man, as were many ſuch like truths to our LORD's own diſciples, when only weak in faith, before he roſe again. But when theſe natural men, like them, have fully felt the power of his reſurrection, they will then own that this doctrine is from GOD, and ſay with the *Samaritans*, "Now we believe not becauſe of thy ſaying," for we ourſelves have experienced it in our hearts.

And O that all unbelievers, all letter-learned maſters of *Iſrael*, who now look upon the doctrine of the power of CHRIST's reſurrection, or our new birth, as an idle tale, and condemn the preachers of it as enthuſiaſts and madmen, did but thus feel the power of it in their ſouls, they would no longer aſk, how this thing could be? But they would be convinced of it, as much as *Thomas* was, when he ſaw the LORD's CHRIST; and like him, when JESUS bid him reach

out his hands and thruſt them into his ſide, in a holy confuſion they would cry out, "My LORD and my GOD!"

But how ſhall an unbeliever, how ſhall the formal chriſtian come thus to "know CHRIST, and the power of his reſurrection?" GOD, who cannot lye, has told us, "I am the reſurrection and the life, whoſoever liveth and believeth in me, though he were dead, yet ſhall he live." Again, ſays the apoſtle, "By faith we are ſaved, and that not of ourſelves, it is the gift of GOD."

This, this is the way, walk in it. Believe, and you ſhall live in CHRIST, and CHRIST in you; you ſhall be one with CHRIST, and CHRIST one with you. But without this, your outward goodneſs and profeſſions will avail you nothing.

But then, by this faith we are not to underſtand a dead ſpeculative faith, a faith in the head; but a living principle wrought in the heart by the powerful operations of the Holy Ghoſt, a faith that will enable us to overcome the world, and forſake all in affection for JESUS CHRIST. For thus ſpeaks our bleſſer Maſter, "Unleſs a man forſake all that he hath, he cannot be my diſciple."

And ſo the apoſtle, in the words immediately following the text, ſays, "being made conformable to his death;" thereby implying, that we cannot know the power of CHRIST's reſurrection, unleſs we are made conformable to him in his death.

If we can reconcile light and darkneſs, heaven and hell, then we may hope to know the power of CHRIST's reſurrection without dying to ourſelves and the world. But till we can do this, we might as well expect that CHRIST will have concord with *Belial.*

For there is ſuch a contrariety between the ſpirit of this world, and the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST, that he who will be

be at friendſhip with the one, muſt be at enmity with the other: "We cannot ſerve GOD and mammon."

This may, indeed, ſeem a hard ſaying; and many, with the young man in the goſpel, may be tempted to go away ſorrowful: But wherefore ſhould this offend them? For what is all that is in the world, the luſt of the eye, the luſt of the fleſh, and the pride of life, but vanity and vexation of ſpirit?

GOD is love; and therefore, could our own wills, or the world, have made us happy, he never would have ſent his own dear Son JESUS CHRIST to die and riſe again, to deliver us from the power of them. But becauſe they only torment, and cannot ſatisfy, therefore GOD bids us to renounce them.

Had any one perſuaded profane *Eſau* not to loſe ſo glorious a privilege, merely for the ſake of gratifying a preſent corrupt inclination, when he ſaw him about to ſell his birth-right for a little red pottage, would not one think that man to have been *Eſau*'s friend? And juſt thus ſtands the caſe between GOD and us. By the death and reſurrection of JESUS CHRIST, we are new-born to an heavenly inheritance amongſt all them which are ſanctified; but our own corrupt wills, would tempt us to ſell this glorious birth-right for the vanities of the world, which, like *Eſau*'s red pottage, may pleaſe us for a while, but will ſoon be taken away from us. GOD knows this, and therefore rather bids us renounce them for a ſeaſon, than for the ſhort enjoyment of them loſe the privilege of that glorious birth-right, to which, by knowing the power of the reſurrection of JESUS CHRIST, we are entitled.

O the depth of the riches and excellency of chriſtianity! Well might the great St. *Paul* count all things but dung and droſs for the excellency of the knowledge of it. Well might he deſire ſo ardently to know JESUS, and the power of his

reſurrection. For even on this ſide eternity it raiſes us above the world, and makes us to ſit in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS.

Well might that glorious company of worthies, recorded in the Holy ſcriptures, ſupported with a deep ſenſe of their heavenly calling, deſpiſe the pleaſures and profits of this life, and wander about in ſheep-ſkins, and goat-ſkins, in dens and caves of the earth, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented.

And O that we were all like minded! that we felt the power of CHRIST's reſurrection as they did! How ſhould we then "count all things as dung and droſs for the excellency of the knowledge of CHRIST JESUS our LORD!" How ſhould we then recover our primitive dignity, trample the earth under our feet, and with our ſouls be continually gaſping after GOD!

And what hinders but we may be thus minded? Is JESUS CHRIST, our great High Prieſt, altered from what he was? No, "he is the ſame yeſterday, to-day, and for ever." And though he is exalted to the right-hand of GOD, yet he is not aſhamed to call us brethren. The power of his reſurrection is as great now as formerly, and the Holy Spirit, which was aſſured to us by his reſurrection, as ready and able to quicken us who are dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, as any ſaint that ever lived. Let us but cry, and that inſtantly, to Him that is mighty and able to ſave; let us, in ſincerity and truth, without ſecretly keeping back the leaſt part, renounce ourſelves and the world; then we ſhall be chriſtians indeed. And though the world may caſt us out, and ſeparate from our company, yet JESUS CHRIST will walk with, and abide in us. And at the general reſurrection of the laſt day, when the voice of the archangel and trump of GOD ſhall bid the ſea and the graves to give up their dead, and all nations ſhall appear before him, then will he confeſs us before his Father and the holy angels, and we ſhall receive that

invitation

invitation which he ſhall then pronounce to all who love and fear him, "Come, ye bleſſed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world."

Grant this, O Father, for thy dear Son's ſake, JESUS CHRIST our LORD; to whom, with Thee and the Holy Ghoſt, &c.

SERMON

SERMON LIV.

Interceſſion every Chriſtian's Duty.

---

1 THESS. v. 25.

Brethren, pray for us.

IF we enquire, why there is ſo little love to be found amongſt chriſtians, why the very characteriſtic, by which every one ſhould know that we are diſciples of the holy JESUS, is almoſt baniſhed out of the chriſtian world, we ſhall find it, in a great meaſure, owing to a neglect or ſuperficial performance of that excellent part of prayer, *interceſſion*, or imploring the divine grace and mercy in behalf of others.

Some forget this duty of praying for others, becauſe they ſeldom remember to pray for themſelves: and even thoſe who are conſtant in praying to their Father who is in heaven, are often ſo ſelfiſh in their addreſſes to the throne of grace, that they do not enlarge their petitions for the welfare of their fellow chriſtians as they ought; and thereby fall ſhort of attaining that chriſtian charity, that unfeigned love to their brethren, which their ſacred profeſſion obliges them to aſpire after, and without which, though they ſhould beſtow all their goods to feed the poor, and even give their bodies to be burned, yet it would profit them nothing.

Since theſe things are ſo, I ſhall from the words of the text (though originally intended to be more confined) endeavour to ſhew,

I. *Firſt*,

I. *Firſt*, That it is every chriſtian's duty to pray for others, as well as for himſelf.

II. *Secondly*, Shew, whom we ought to pray for, and in what manner we ſhould do it. And,

III. *Thirdly*, I ſhall offer ſome motives to excite all chriſtians to abound in this great duty of interceſſion.

I. *Firſt*, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew, That it is every chriſtian's duty to pray for others, as well as for himſelf.

Now *prayer* is a duty founded on natural religion; the very heathens never neglected it, though many chriſtian heathens amongſt us do: and it is ſo eſſential to chriſtianity, that you might as reaſonably expect to find a living man without breath, as a true chriſtian without the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication. Thus, no ſooner was St. *Paul* converted, but "behold he prayeth," ſaith the LORD Almighty. And thus will it be with every child of GOD, as ſoon as he becomes ſuch: prayer being truly called, The natural cry of the new-born ſoul.

For in the heart of every true believer there is a heavenly tendency, a divine attraction, which as ſenſibly draws him to converſe with GOD, as the load-ſtone attracts the needle.

A deep ſenſe of their own weakneſs, and of CHRIST's fulneſs; a ſtrong conviction of their natural corruption, and of the neceſſity of renewing grace; will not let them reſt from crying day and night to their Almighty Redeemer, that the divine image, which they loſt in *Adam*, may through his all-powerful mediation, and the ſanctifying operations of his bleſſed ſpirit, be begun, carried on, and fully perfected both in their ſouls and bodies.

Thus earneſt, thus importunate, are all ſincere chriſtians in praying for themſelves: but then, not having ſo lively, laſting,

ıſting, and deep a ſenſe of the wants of their chriſtian rethren, they are for the moſt part too remiſs and defective n their prayers for them. Whereas, was the love of GOD hed abroad in our hearts, and did we love our neighbour in hat manner, in which the Son of GOD our Saviour loved us, ınd according to his command and example, we could not ɔut be as importunate for their ſpiritual and temporal welfare, as for our own; and as earneſtly deſire and endeavour that ɔthers ſhould ſhare in the benefits of the death and paſſion of JESUS CHRIST, as we ourſelves.

Let not any one think, that this is an uncommon degree of charity; an high pitch of perfection, to which not every one can attain: for, if we are all commanded to "love our neighbour (that is every man) even as ourſelves," nay to "lay down our lives for the brethren;" then, it is the duty of all to pray for their neighbours as much as for themſelves, and by all poſſible acts and expreſſions of love and affection towards them, at all times, to ſhew their readineſs even to lay down their lives for them, if ever it ſhould pleaſe GOD to call them to it.

Our bleſſed Saviour, as "he hath ſet us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps" in every thing elſe, ſo hath he more eſpecially in this: for in that divine, that perfect and inimitable prayer (recorded in the xviith of St. *John*) which he put up juſt before his paſſion, we find but few petitions for his own, though many for his diſciples welfare: and in that perfect form which he has been pleaſed to preſcribe us, we are taught to ſay, not *My*, but "*Our* Father," thereby to put us in mind, that, whenever we approach the throne of grace, we ought to pray not for ourſelves alone, but for all our brethren in CHRIST.

Interceſſion then is certainly a duty incumbent upon all chriſtians.

II. Whom we are to intercede for, and how this duty is to be performed, comes next to be conſidered.

I. And

1. And firſt, our interceſſion muſt be *univerſal.* "I will, (ſays the apoſtle) that prayers, ſupplications and interceſſions be made for all men." For as GOD's mercy is over all his works, as JESUS CHRIST died to redeem a people out of all nations and languages; ſo we ſhould pray, that "all men may come to the knowledge of the truth, and be ſaved." Many precious promiſes are made in holy writ, that the goſpel ſhall be publiſhed through the whole world, that "the earth ſhall be covered with the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the ſea:" and therefore it is our duty not to confine our petitions to our own nation, but to pray that all thoſe nations, who now ſit in darkneſs and in the ſhadow of death, may have the glorious goſpel ſhine out upon them, as well as upon us. But you need not that any man ſhould teach you this, ſince ye yourſelves are taught of GOD, and of JESUS CHRIST himſelf, to pray, that his kingdom may come; part of the meaning of which petition is, that "GOD's ways may be known upon earth, and his ſaving health among all nations."

2. Next to the praying for all men, we ſhould, according to St. *Paul*'s rule, pray for *Kings*; particularly for our preſent ſovereign King *George*, and all that are put in authority under him: that we may lead quiet lives, in all godlineſs and honeſty. For, if we conſider how heavy the burden of government is, and how much the welfare of any people depends on the zeal and godly converſation of thoſe that have the rule over them: if we ſet before us the many dangers and difficulties, to which governors by their ſtation are expoſed, and the continual temptations they lie under to luxury and ſelf-indulgence; we ſhall not only pity, but pray for them: that he who preſerved *Eſther*, *David*, and *Joſiah*, "unſpotted from the world," amidſt the grandeur of a court, and gave ſucceſs to their deſigns, would alſo preſerve them holy and unblameable, and proſper all the works of their hands upon them. But

3. *Thirdly*, you ought, in a more eſpecial manner, to pray for thoſe, whom "the Holy Ghoſt hath made *Overſeers* over you."

you." This is what St. *Paul* begs, again and again, of the churches to whom he writes: Says he in the text, "Brethren, pray for us;" and again, in his epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, 'praying always, with all manner of ſupplication; and for me alſo, that I may open my mouth boldly, to declare the myſtery of the goſpel." And in another place, to expreſs his earneſtneſs in this requeſt, and the great importance of their prayers for him, he bids the church "ſtrive, (or, as the original word ſignifies, be in an agony) together with him in their prayers." And ſurely, if the great St. *Paul*, that choſen veſſel, that favourite of heaven, needed the moſt importunate prayers of his chriſtian converts; much more do the ordinary miniſters of the goſpel ſtand in need of the interceſſion of their reſpective flocks.

And I cannot but in a more eſpecial manner inſiſt upon this branch of your duty, becauſe it is a matter of ſuch importance: for, no doubt, much good is frequently withheld from many, by reaſon of their neglecting to pray for their miniſters, and which they would have received, had they prayed for them as they ought. Not to mention, that people often complain of the want of diligent and faithful paſtors. But how do they deſerve good paſtors, who will not earneſtly pray to GOD for ſuch? If we will not pray to the LORD of the harveſt, can it be expected he will ſend forth labourers into his harveſt?

Beſides, what ingratitude is it, not to pray for your miniſters! For ſhall they watch and labour in the word and doctrine for you, and your ſalvation, and ſhall not you pray for them in return? If any beſtow favours on your bodies, you think it right, meet, and your bounden duty, to pray for them; and ſhall not they be remembered in your prayers, who daily feed and nouriſh your ſouls? Add to all this, that praying for your miniſters, will be a manifeſt proof of your believing, that though *Paul* plant, and *Apollos* water, yet it is GOD alone who giveth the increaſe. And you will alſo find it the beſt means you can uſe, to promote your own welfare; becauſe GOD, in anſwer to your prayers, may impart a double

portion

portion of his holy ſpirit to them, whereby they will be qualified to deal out to you larger meaſures of knowledge in ſpiritual things, and be enabled more ſkilfully to divide the word of truth.

Would men but conſtantly obſerve this direction, and when their miniſters are praying in their name to GOD, humbly beſeech him to perform all their petitions: or, when they are ſpeaking in GOD's name to them, pray that the Holy Ghoſt may fall on all them that hear the word; we ſhould find a more viſible good effect of their doctrine, and a greater mutual love between miniſters and their people. For miniſters hands would then be held up by the people's interceſſions, and the people will never dare to villify or traduce thoſe who are the conſtant ſubjects of their prayers.

4. Next to our miniſters, *our friends* claim a place in our interceſſions; but then we ſhould not content ourſelves with praying in general terms for them, but ſuit our prayers to their particular circumſtances. When *Miriam* was afflicted with a leproſy from GOD, *Moſes* cried and ſaid, "LORD, heal her." And when the nobleman came to apply to JESUS CHRIST, in behalf of his child, he ſaid, "LORD, my little daughter lieth at the point of death, I pray thee to come and heal her." In like manner, when our friends are under any afflicting circumſtances, we ſhould endeavour to pray for them, with a particular regard to thoſe circumſtances. For inſtance, is a friend ſick? we ſhould pray, that if it be GOD's good pleaſure, it may not be unto death; but if otherwiſe, that he would give him grace ſo to take his viſitation, that, after this painful life ended, he may dwell with him in life everlaſting. Is a friend in doubt in an important matter? we ſhould lay his caſe before GOD, as *Moſes* did that of the daughters of *Zelophehad*, and pray, that GOD's Holy Spirit may lead him into all truth, and give all ſeaſonable direction. Is he in want? we ſhould pray, that his faith may never fail, and that in GOD's due time he may be relieved. And in all other caſes, we ſhould not pray for our friends only in generals, but ſuit our petitions to their particular ſufferings and afflictions;

for otherwiſe, we may never aſk perhaps for the things our friends moſt want.

It muſt be confeſſed, that ſuch a procedure will oblige ſome often to break from the forms they uſe; but if we accuſtom ourſelves to it, and have a deep ſenſe of what we aſk for, the moſt illiterate chriſtian will not want proper words to expreſs themſelves.

We have many noble inſtances in holy ſcripture of the ſucceſs of this kind of particular interceſſion; but none more remarkable than that of *Abraham*'s ſervant, in the book of *Geneſis*, who being ſent to ſeek a wife for his ſon *Iſaac*, prayed in a moſt particular manner in his behalf. And the ſequel of the ſtory informs us, how remarkably his prayer was anſwered. And did chriſtians now pray for their friends in the ſame particular manner, and with the ſame faith as *Abraham*'s ſervant did for his maſter; they would, no doubt, in many inſtances, receive as viſible anſwers, and have as much reaſon to bleſs GOD for them, as he had. But

5. As we ought thus to intercede for our friends, ſo in like manner muſt we alſo pray for *our enemies*. "Bleſs them that curſe you, (ſays JESUS CHRIST) and pray for them that deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you." Which commands he enforced in the ſtrongeſt manner by his own example: in the very agonies and pangs of death, he prayed even for his murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!" This, it muſt needs be confeſſed, is a difficult duty, yet not impracticable, to thoſe who have renounced the things of this preſent life, (from an inordinate love of which all enmities ariſe) and who knowing the terrible woes denounced againſt thoſe who offend CHRIST's little ones, can, out of real pity, and a ſenſe of their danger, pray for thoſe by whom ſuch offences come.

6. Laſtly, and to conclude this head, we ſhould intercede for all that are any ways *afflicted* in mind, body, or eſtate; for

all who deſire, and ſtand in need of our prayers, and for all who do not pray for themſelves.

And Oh! that all who hear me, would ſet apart ſome time every day for the due performance of this moſt neceſſary duty! In order to which,

I ſhall now proceed,

III. To ſhew the advantages, and offer ſome conſiderations to excite you to the practice of daily interceſſion. And

1. *Firſt*, It will fill your hearts with love one to another. He that every day heartily intercedes at the throne of grace for all mankind, cannot but in a ſhort time be filled with love and charity to all: and the frequent exerciſe of his love in this manner, will inſenſibly enlarge his heart, and make him partaker of that exceeding abundance of it which is in CHRIST JESUS our LORD! Envy, malice, revenge, and ſuch like helliſh tempers, can never long harbour in a gracious interceſſor's breaſt; but he will be filled with joy, peace, meekneſs, long-ſuffering, and all other graces of the Holy Spirit. By frequently laying his neighbour's wants before GOD, he will be touched with a fellow-feeling of them; he will rejoice with thoſe that do rejoice, and weep with thoſe that weep. Every bleſſing beſtowed on others, inſtead of exciting envy in him, will be looked on as an anſwer to his particular interceſſion, and fill his ſoul with joy unſpeakable and full of glory.

Abound therefore in acts of general and particular interceſſions; and when you hear of your neighbour's faults, inſtead of relating them to, and expoſing them before others, lay them in ſecret before GOD, and beg of him to correct and amend them. When you hear of a notorious ſinner, inſtead of thinking you do well to be angry, beg of JESUS CHRIST to convert, and make him a monument of his free grace; you cannot imagine what a bleſſed alteration this practice will make in your heart, and how much you will increaſe

day

day by day in the ſpirit of love and meekneſs towards all mankind!

But farther, to excite you to the conſtant practice of this duty of interceſſion, conſider the many inſtances in holy ſcripture, of the power and efficacy of it. Great and excellent things are there recorded as the effects of this divine employ. It has ſtopped plagues, it has opened and ſhut heaven; and has frequently turned away GOD's fury from his people. How was *Abimelech*'s houſe freed from the diſeaſe GOD ſent amongſt them, at the interceſſion of *Abraham!* When "*Phineas* ſtood up and prayed," how ſoon did the plague ceaſe! When *Daniel* humbled and afflicted his ſoul, and interceded for the LORD's inheritance, how quickly was an angel diſpatched to tell him, "his prayer was heard!" And, to mention but one inſtance more, how does GOD own himſelf as it were overcome with the importunity of *Moſes*, when he was interceding for his idolatrous people, "Let me alone," ſays GOD!

This ſufficiently ſhews, I could almoſt ſay, the omnipotency of interceſſion, and how we may, like *Jacob*, wreſtle with GOD, and by an holy violence prevail both for ourſelves and others. And no doubt it is owing to the ſecret and prevailing interceſſions of the few righteous ſouls who ſtill remain among us, that GOD has yet ſpared this miſerably ſinful nation: for were there not ſome ſuch faithful ones, like *Moſes*, left to ſtand in the gap, we ſhould ſoon be deſtroyed, even as was *Sodom*, and reduced to aſhes like unto *Gomorrah*.

But, to ſtir you up yet farther to this exerciſe of interceſſion, conſider, that in all probability, it is the frequent employment even of the glorified ſaints: for though they are delivered from the burden of the fleſh, and reſtored to the glorious liberty of the ſons of GOD, yet as their happineſs cannot be perfectly conſummated 'till the reſurrection of the laſt day, when all their brethren will be glorified with them, we cannot but think they are often importunate in beſeeching our heavenly Father, ſhortly to accompliſh the number

to be judged by man's judgment; I hope my eye is ſingle; but I beſeech you, brethren, by the mercies of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, pray that it may be more ſo! and that I may increaſe with the increaſe of grace in the knowledge and love of GOD through JESUS CHRIST our Lord.

And now, brethren, what ſhall I ſay more? I could wiſh to continue my diſcourſe much longer; for I can never fully expreſs the deſire of my ſoul towards you! Finally, therefore, brethren, "whatſoever things are holy, whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things are honeſt, whatſoever things are of good report: if there be any conſolation in CHRIST, if any fellowſhip of the ſpirit," if any hopes of our appearing to the comfort of each other at the awful tribunal of JESUS CHRIST, "think of the things that you have heard," and of thoſe which your paſtors have declared, and will yet declare unto you; and continue under their miniſtry to "work out your own ſalvation with fear and trembling:" ſo that whether I ſhould never ſee you any more, or whether it ſhall pleaſe GOD to bring me back again at any time, I may always have the ſatisfaction of knowing that your converſation is ſuch "as becometh the goſpel of CHRIST."

I almoſt perſuade myſelf, that I could willingly ſuffer all things, ſo that it might any ways promote the ſalvation of your precious and immortal ſouls; and I beſeech you, as my laſt requeſt, "obey them that have the rule over you in the LORD; and be always ready to attend on their miniſtry, as it is your bounden duty. Think not that I deſire to have myſelf exalted at the expence of another's character; but rather think this, not to have any man's perſon too much in admiration; but eſteem all your miniſters highly in love, as they juſtly deſerve for their work's ſake.

And now, "brethren, I commend you to GOD, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and give you an inheritance amongſt all them that are ſanctified." May GOD reward you for all your works of faith, and

of love, and make you to abound more and more in good word and work towards all men. May he truly all that have been convinced, and awaken all that id in treſpaſſes and ſins! May he confirm all that are ng! And may you all go on from one degree of grace nother, till you arrive unto the meaſure of the ſtature fulneſs of CHRIST; and thereby be made meet to ſtand that GOD, "in whoſe preſence is the fulneſs of joy, whoſe right-hand there are pleaſures for evermore!" ! Amen!

SERMON LV.

Perſecution every Chriſtian's Lot.

2 TIM. iii. 12.

'ea, and all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, *ſhall ſuffer Perſecution.*

WHEN our LORD was pleaſed to take upon himſelf the form of a ſervant, and to go about preaching the ngdom of GOD; he took all opportunities in public, and ore eſpecially in private, to caution his diſciples againſt ſeek- g great things for themſelves, and alſo to forewarn them of ıe many diſtreſſes, afflictions and perſecutions, which they uſt expect to endure for his name's ſake. The great apoſtle *aul* therefore, the author of this epiſtle, in this, as in all her things, following the ſteps of his bleſſed Maſter, takes ırticular care, among other apoſtolical admonitions, to warn)ung *Timothy* of the difficulties he muſt expect to meet with the courſe of his miniſtry: "This know alſo, that in the ſt days perilous times ſhall come. For men ſhall be lovers their ownſelves, covetous, proud, blaſphemers, diſobedient parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, uce-breakers, falſe accuſers, incontinent, fierce, deſpiſers thoſe that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers pleaſure more than lovers of GOD; having a form of god- neſs, but denying the power thereof: from ſuch turn away. or of this ſort are they who creep into houſes, and lead ıptive ſilly women laden with ſins, led away with divers ıſts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge the truth. Now, as *Jannes* and *Jambres* (two of the *Egyp- an* magicians) withſtood *Moſes* (by working ſham miracles)

ſo

ſo do they alſo reſiſt the truth; and (notwithſtanding they keep up the form of religion) are men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith." But, in order to keep him from ſinking under their oppoſition, he tells him, that though GOD, for wiſe ends, permitted theſe falſe teachers, as he did the magicians, to oppoſe for ſome time, yet they ſhould now proceed no farther; "For their folly (ſays he) ſhall be made manifeſt unto all men, as theirs (the Magicians) alſo was," when they could not ſtand before *Moſes* becauſe of the boil; for the boil was upon the *Magicians*, as well as upon all the *Egyptians*. And then, to encourage *Timothy* yet the more, he propounds to him his own example; "But thou haſt fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpoſe, faith, long-ſuffering, charity, patience, perſecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at *Antioch*, at *Iconium*, at *Lyſtra*; what perſecutions I endured; but out of them all the LORD delivered me." And then, leſt *Timothy* might think that this was only the particular caſe of *Paul*, ſays he, in the words of the text, "Yea, and all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhall ſuffer perſecution."

The words, without conſidering them as they ſtand in relation to the context, contain an important truth, that perſecution is the common lot of every godly man. This is a hard ſaying, How few can bear it? I truſt GOD, in the following diſcourſe, will enable me to make it good, by ſhewing,

I. What it is to live godly in CHRIST JESUS.

II. The different kinds of perſecution to which they, who live godly, are expoſed.

III. Why it is, that godly men muſt expect to ſuffer perſecution.

Laſtly, We ſhall apply the whole.

1. *Firſt*, Let us conſider what it is to live godly in CHRIST JESUS. This ſuppoſes, that we are made the righteouſneſs of

of GOD in CHRIST, that we are born again, and are one with CHRIST by a living faith, and a vital union, even as JESUS CHRIST and the Father are One. Unleſs we are thus converted, and transformed by the renewing of our minds, we cannot properly be ſaid to be in CHRIST, much leſs to live godly in him. To be in CHRIST merely by baptiſm, and an outward profeſſion, is not to be in Him in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word: no; "They that are in CHRIST, are new creatures; old things are paſſed away, and all things are become new" in their hearts. Their life is hid with CHRIST in GOD; their ſouls daily feed on the inviſible realities of another world. To "live godly in CHRIST," is to make the divine will, and not our own, the ſole principle of all our thoughts, words, and actions; ſo that, "whether we eat or drink, or whatſoever we do, we do all to the glory of GOD." Thoſe who live godly in CHRIST, may not ſo much be ſaid to live, as CHRIST to live in them: He is their Alpha and Omega, their firſt and laſt, their beginning and end. They are led by his Spirit, as a child is led by the hand of its father; and are willing to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he leads them. They hear, know, and obey his voice. Their affections are ſet on things above; their hopes are full of immortality; their citizenſhip is in heaven. Being born again of GOD, they habitually live to, and daily walk with, GOD. They are pure in heart; and, from a principle of faith in CHRIST, are holy in all manner of converſation and godlineſs.

This is to "live godly in CHRIST JESUS:" and hence we may eaſily learn, why ſo few ſuffer perſecution? Becauſe, ſo few live godly in CHRIST JESUS. You may live formally in CHRIST, you may attend on outward duties; you may live morally in CHRIST, you may (as they term it) do no one any harm, and avoid perſecution: but they "that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhall ſuffer perſecution."

2. *Secondly*, What is the meaning of the word Perſecution, and how many kinds there are of it, I come now to conſider.

The

The word Perſecution, is derived from a *Greek* word ſignifying *to purſue*, and generally implies purſuing a perſon for the ſake of his goodneſs, or GOD's good-will to him. The

Firſt kind of it, is that of the *Heart*. We have have an early example of this in that wicked one *Cain*, who, becauſe the LORD had reſpect to *Abel* and his offering, and not to him and his offering, was very wroth, his countenance fell, and at length he cruelly ſlew his envied brother. Thus the *Phariſees* hated and perſecuted our LORD long before they laid hold on him: and our LORD mentions being inwardly hated of men, as one kind of Perſecution his diſciples were to undergo. This heart-enmity (if I may ſo term it) is the root of all other kinds of Perſecution, and is, in ſome degree or other, to be found in the ſoul of every unregenerated man; and numbers are guilty of this perſecution, who never have it in their power to perſecute any other way. Nay, numbers would actually put in practice all other degrees of perſecution, was not the name of Perſecution become odious amongſt mankind, and did they not hereby run the hazard of loſing their reputation. Alas! how many at the great day, whom we know not now, will be convicted and condemned, that all their life harboured a ſecret evil-will againſt *Zion!* They may now ſcreen it before men; but GOD ſeeth the enmity of their hearts, and will judge them as Perſecutors at the great and terrible day of judgment. A

Second degree of Perſecution is that of the tongue; "out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth ſpeaketh." Many, I ſuppoſe, think it no harm to ſhoot out arrows, even bitter words, againſt the diſciples of the LORD: they ſcatter their firebrands, arrows and death, ſaying, "Are we not in ſport?" But, however they may eſteem it, in GOD's account evil-ſpeaking is a high degree of Perſecution. Thus *Iſhmael's* mocking *Iſaac*, is termed perſecuting him. "Bleſſed are ye (ſays our LORD) when men ſhall revile you and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſely for my name's ſake." From whence we may gather, that reviling, and ſpeaking all manner of evil for CHRIST's ſake,

is

is a high degree of perſecution. For " a good name, (ſays the wiſe man) is better than precious ointment," and, to many, is dearer than life itſelf. It is a great breach of the ſixth commandment, to ſlander any one; but to ſpeak evil of and ſlander the diſciples of CHRIST, merely becauſe they are his diſciples, muſt be highly provoking in the ſight of GOD; and ſuch who are guilty of it (without repentance) will find that JESUS CHRIST will call them to an account, and puniſh them for all their ungodly and hard ſpeeches in a lake of fire and brimſtone. This ſhall be their portion to drink. The

Third and *laſt* kind of Perſecution, is that which expreſſes itſelf in *actions:* as when wicked men ſeparate the children of GOD from their company; " Bleſſed are ye, (ſays our LORD) when they ſhall ſeparate you from their company:" or expoſe them to church-cenſures. " They ſhall put you out of their ſynagogues;" threatening and prohibiting them from making an open profeſſion of his religion or worſhip; or interdicting miniſters for preaching his word, as the high-prieſts threatened the apoſtles, and " forbad them any more to ſpeak in the name of JESUS;" and *Paul* breathed out threatenings and ſlaughters againſt the diſciples of the LORD: or when they call them into courts; " You ſhall be called before governors," ſays our LORD: or when they fine, impriſon, or puniſh them, by confiſcation of goods, cruel ſcourging, and, laſtly, death itſelf.

It would be impoſſible to enumerate in what various ſhapes perſecution has appeared. It is a many-headed monſter, cruel as the grave, inſatiable as hell; and, what is worſe, it generallly appears under the cloak of religion. But, cruel, inſatiable, and horrid as it is, they that live godly in CHRIST JESUS, muſt expect to ſuffer and encounter with it in all its forms.

This is what we are to make good under our next general head.

3. *Thirdly,*

3. *Thirdly*, Why is it that godly men muſt expect to ſuffer perſecution? And,

Firſt, This appears from the whole tenor of our LORD's doctrine. We will begin with his divine ſermon on the mount. "Bleſſed are they who are perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." So that, if our LORD ſpoke truth, we are not ſo bleſſed as to have an intereſt in the kingdom of heaven, unleſs we are or have been perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake. Nay, our LORD (it is remarkable) employs three verſes in this beatitude, and only one in each of the others; not only to ſhew that it was a thing which men (as men) are unwilling to believe, but alſo the neceſſary conſequence of it upon our being chriſtians. This is likewiſe evident from all thoſe paſſages, wherein our LORD informs us, that he came upon the earth, "not to ſend peace, but a ſword;" and that the father-in-law ſhould be againſt the mother-in-law, and a man's foes ſhould be thoſe of his own houſhold. Paſſages, which though confined by falſe prophets to the firſt, I am perſuaded will be verified by the experience of all true chriſtians in this, and every age of the church. It would be endleſs to recount all the places, wherein our LORD forewarns his diſciples, that they ſhould be called before rulers, and thruſt out of ſynagogues, nay, that the time would come, wherein men ſhould think they did GOD ſervice to kill them. For this reaſon he ſo frequently declared, that "unleſs a man forſake all that he had, and even hated life itſelf, he could not be his diſciple." And therefore it is worthy our obſervation, that in the remarkable paſſage, wherein our LORD makes ſuch an extenſive promiſe to thoſe who left all for him, he cautiouſly inſerts perſecution. "And JESUS anſwered and ſaid, Verily I ſay unto you, there is no man that hath left houſe, or brethren, or ſiſters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my ſake and the goſpel's, but he ſhall receive an hundred-fold now in this time; houſes and brethren, and ſiſters and mothers, and children and lands, with perſecutions; (the word is in the plural number, including all kinds of perſecution) and in the world to come eternal life." He that

that hath ears to hear, let him hear what CHRIST ſays in all theſe paſſages, and then confeſs, that all who will live godly in CHRIST JESUS ſhall ſuffer perſecution.

As this is proved from our LORD's doctrine, ſo it is no leſs evident from his life. Follow him from the manger to the croſs, and ſee whether any perſecution was like that which the Son of GOD, the LORD of glory, underwent whilſt here on earth. How was he hated by wicked men? How often would that hatred have excited them to lay hold of him, had it not been for fear of the people? How was he reviled, counted and called a Blaſphemer, a Wine-bibber, a Samaritan, nay, a Devil, and, in one word, had all manner of evil ſpoken againſt him falſely? What contradiction of ſinners did he endure againſt himſelf? How did men ſeparate from his company, and were aſhamed to walk with him openly? inſomuch that he once ſaid to his own diſciples, "Will you alſo go away?" Again, How was he ſtoned, thruſt out of the ſynagogues, arraigned as a deceiver of the people, a ſeditious and peſtilent fellow, an enemy to *Cæſar*, and as ſuch ſcourged, blind-folded, ſpit upon, and at length condemned, and nailed to an accurſed tree? Thus was the Maſter perſecuted, thus did the LORD ſuffer; and the ſervant is not above his Maſter, nor the diſciple above his Lord: "If they have perſecuted me, they will alſo perſecute you," ſays the bleſſed JESUS. And again, "Every man that is perfect (a true chriſtian) muſt be as his Maſter," or ſuffer as he did. For in all theſe things our LORD has ſet us an example, that we ſhould follow his ſteps: and therefore, far be it that any, who live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhould henceforward expect to eſcape ſuffering perſecution.

But farther: not only our LORD's example, but the example of all the ſaints that ever lived, evidently demonſtrates the truth of the apoſtle's aſſertion in the text. How ſoon was *Abel* made a martyr for his religion? How was *Iſaac* mocked by the ſon of the bond-woman? And what a large catalogue of ſuffering Old Teſtament ſaints, have we recorded

corded in the xith chapter of the *Hebrews!* Read the *Acts* of the Apoſtles, and ſee how the firſt chriſtians were threatened, ſtoned, impriſoned, ſcourged, and perſecuted even unto death. Examine Church Hiſtory in after-ages, and you will find the murder of the innocents by *Herod*, was but an earneſt of the innocent blood which ſhould be ſhed for the ſake of JESUS. Examine the experience of ſaints now living on earth; and, if it were poſſible to conſult the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, I am perſuaded each would concur with the apoſtle in aſſerting, that "all who will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhall ſuffer perſecution."

How can it be otherwiſe in the very nature of things? Ever ſince the fall, there has been an irreconcileable enmity between the ſeed of the woman and the ſeed of the ſerpent. Wicked men hate GOD, and therefore cannot but hate thoſe who are like him: they hate to be reformed, and therefore muſt hate and perſecute thoſe, who, by a contrary behaviour, teſtify of them, that their deeds are evil. Beſides, pride of heart leads men to perſecute the ſervants of JESUS CHRIST. If they commend them, they are afraid of being aſked, Why do not you follow them? And therefore becauſe they dare not imitate, though they may ſometimes be even forced to approve their way, yet pride and envy make them turn perſecutors. Hence it is, that as it was formerly, ſo it is now, and ſo will it be to the end of time; "He that is born after the fleſh, (the natural man, does and) will perſecute him that is born after the Spirit," the regenerate man. Becauſe chriſtians are not of the world, but CHRIST hath choſen them out of the world, therefore the world will hate them. If it be objected againſt this doctrine, that we now live in a chriſtian world, and therefore muſt not expect ſuch perſecution as formerly; I anſwer, All are not chriſtians that are called ſo; and, till the heart is changed, the enmity againſt GOD (which is the root of all perſecution) remains: and conſequently chriſtians, falſely ſo called, will perſecute as well as others. I obſerved therefore, in the beginning of this diſcourſe, that *Paul* mentions thoſe that had a form of religion,

as

as perſons of whom *Timothy* had need be chiefly aware: for, as our LORD and his apoſtles were moſtly perſecuted by their countrymen the *Jews*, ſo we muſt expect the like uſage from the Formaliſts of our own nation, the *Phariſees*, who ſeem to be religious. The moſt horrid and barbarous perſecutions have been carried on by thoſe who have called themſelves Chriſtians; witneſs the days of queen *Mary*; and the fines, baniſhments and impriſonments of the children of GOD in the laſt century, and the bitter, irreconcileable hatred that appears in thouſands who call themſelves Chriſtians, even in the preſent days wherein we live.

Perſons, who argue againſt perſecution, are not ſufficiently ſenſible of the bitter enmity of the heart of every unregenerate man againſt GOD. For my own part, I am ſo far from wondering that chriſtians are perſecuted, that I wonder our ſtreets do not run with the blood of the ſaints: was mens power equal to their wills, ſuch a horrid ſpectacle would ſoon appear. But,

Perſecution is neceſſary in reſpect to the godly themſelves. If we have not all manner of evil ſpoken of us, how can we know whether we ſeek only that honour which cometh from above? If we have no perſecutors, how can our paſſive graces be kept in exerciſe? How can many chriſtian precepts be put into practice? How can we love, pray for, and do good to, thoſe who deſpitefully uſe us? How can we overcome evil with good? In ſhort, how can we know we love GOD better than life itſelf? *Paul* was ſenſible of all this, and therefore ſo poſitively and peremptorily aſſerts, that "all who will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhall ſuffer perſecution."

Not that I affirm, all are perſecuted in a like degree. No: this would be contrary both to ſcripture and experience. But though all chriſtians are not really called to ſuffer every kind of perſecution, yet all chriſtians are liable thereto: and notwithſtanding ſome may live in more peaceful times of the church than others, yet all chriſtians, in all ages, will find

by their own experience, that, whether they act in a private or public capacity, they muſt, in ſome degree or other, ſuffer perſecution.

Here then I would pauſe, and, *Laſtly*, by way of application, exhort all perſons,

Firſt, To ſtand a while and examine themſelves. For, by what has been ſaid, you may gather one mark, whereby you may judge whether you are chriſtians or not. Were you ever perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake? If not, you never yet lived godly in CHRIST our LORD. Whatever you may ſay to the contrary, the inſpired apoſtle, in the words of the text (the truth of which, I think, I have ſufficiently proved) poſitively aſſerts, that all who will live godly in Him, ſhall ſuffer perſecution. Not that all who are perſecuted are real chriſtians; for many ſometimes ſuffer, and are perſecuted, on other accounts than for righteouſneſs ſake. The great queſtion therefore is, Whether you were ever perſecuted for living godly? You may boaſt of your great prudence and ſagacity (and indeed theſe are excellent things) and glory becauſe you have not run ſuch lengths, and made yourſelves ſo ſingular, and liable to ſuch contempt, as ſome others have. But, alas! this is not a mark of your being of a Chriſtian, but of a *Laodicean* ſpirit, neither hot nor cold, and fit only to be ſpewed out of the mouth of GOD. That which you call prudence, is often, only cowardice, dreadful hypocriſy, pride of heart, which makes you dread contempt, and afraid to give up your reputation for GOD. You are aſhamed of CHRIST and his goſpel; and in all probability, was he to appear a ſecond time upon earth, in words, as well as works, you would deny him. Awake therefore, all ye that live only formally in CHRIST JESUS, and no longer ſeek that honour which cometh of man. I do not deſire to court you, but I intreat you to live godly, and fear not contempt for the ſake of JESUS CHRIST. Beg of GOD to give you his Holy Spirit, that you may ſee through, and diſcover the latent hypocriſy of your hearts, and no longer deceive your own ſouls. Remember you cannot

cannot reconcile two irreconcileable differences, GOD and Mammon, the friendſhip of this world with the favour of GOD. Know you not who hath told you, that "the friendſhip of this world is enmity with GOD?" If therefore you are in friendſhip with the world, notwithſtanding all your ſpecious pretences to piety, you are at enmity with GOD: you are only heart-hypocrites; and, "What is the hope of the hypocrite, when GOD ſhall take away his ſoul?" Let the words of the text ſound an alarm in your ears; O let them ſink deep into your hearts; "Yea, and all that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhall ſuffer perſecution."

Secondly, From the words of the text, I would take occaſion to ſpeak to thoſe, who are about to liſt themſelves under the banner of CHRIST's croſs. What ſay you? Are you reſolved to live godly in CHRIST JESUS, notwithſtanding the conſequence will be, that you muſt ſuffer perſecution? You are beginning to build; but have you taken our LORD's advice, to "ſit down firſt and count the coſt?" Have you well weighed with yourſelves that weighty declaration, "He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me;" and again, "Unleſs a man forſake all that he hath he cannot be my diſciple?" Perhaps ſome of you have great poſſeſſions; will not you go away ſorrowful, if CHRIST ſhould require you to ſell all that you have! Others of you again may be kinſmen, or ſome way related, or under obligations, to the high-prieſts, or other great perſonages, who may be perſecuting the church of CHRIST: What ſay you? Will you, with *Moſes*, "rather chuſe to ſuffer affliction with the people of GOD, than enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon?" Perhaps you may ſay, my friends will not oppoſe me. That is more than you know: in all probability your chief enemies will be thoſe of your own houſhold. If therefore they ſhould oppoſe you, are you willing naked to follow a naked CHRIST? and to wander about in ſheep-ſkins and goats-ſkins, in dens and caves of the earth, being afflicted, deſtitute, tormented, rather than not be CHRIST's diſciples? You are now all following with zeal, as *Ruth* and *Orpah* did *Naomi*, and may weep under the word; but are not your

tear crocodiles tears? And, when difficulties come, will you not go back from following your LORD, as *Orpah* departed from following *Naomi*? Have you really the root of grace in your hearts? or, are you only stony-ground hearers? You receive the word with joy; but, when perſecution ariſes because of the word, will you not be immediately offended? Be not angry with me for putting theſe queſtions to you. I am jealous over you, but it is with a godly jealouſy: for, alas! how many have put their hands to the plough, and afterwards have ſhamefully looked back? I only deal with you, as our LORD did with the perſon that ſaid, "LORD, I will follow thee whitherſoever thou wilt." "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts, "but the ſon of man, (ſays he) hath not where to lay his head." What ſay you? Are you willing to endure hardneſs, and thereby approve yourſelves good ſoldiers of JESUS CHRIST? You now come on foot out of the towns and villages to hear the word, and receive me as a meſſenger of GOD: but will you not by and by cry out, Away with him, away with him; it is not fit ſuch a fellow ſhould live upon the earth? Perhaps ſome of you, like *Hazael*, may ſay, "Are we dogs, that we ſhould do this?" But, alas! I have met with many unhappy ſouls, who have drawn back unto perdition, and have afterwards accounted me their enemy, for dealing faithfully with them; though once, if it were poſſible, they would have plucked out their own eyes, and have given them unto me. Sit down therefore, I beſeech you, and ſeriouſly count the coſt, and aſk yourſelves again and again, whether you count all things but dung and droſs, and are willing to ſuffer the loſs of all things, ſo that you may win CHRIST, and be found in him: for you may aſſure yourſelves, the apoſtle hath not ſpoken in vain, "All that will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, ſhall ſuffer perſecution."

Thirdly, The text ſpeaks to you that are patiently ſuffering for the truth's ſake: "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; great ſhall be your reward in heaven." For to you it is given, not only to believe, but alſo to ſuffer, and perhaps remarkably too, for the ſake of JESUS! This is a mark of your

your diſcipleſhip, an evidence that you do live godly in CHRIST JESUS. Fear not, therefore, neither be diſmayed. O be not weary and faint in your minds! JESUS, your LORD, your life, cometh, and his reward is with him. Though all men forſake you, yet will not he: no; the Spirit of CHRIST and of glory ſhall reſt upon you. In patience therefore poſſeſs your ſouls. Sanctify the LORD GOD in your hearts. Be in nothing terrified by your adverſaries: on their part CHRIST is evil ſpoken of; on your part he is glorified. Be not aſhamed of your glory, ſince others can glory in their ſhame. Think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery trial, wherewith you are or may be tried. The Devil rages, knowing that he hath but a ſhort time to reign. He or his emiſſaries have no more power than what is given them from above: GOD ſets them their bounds, which they cannot paſs; and the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; no one ſhall ſet upon you to hurt you, without your heavenly Father's knowledge. Do your earthly friends and parents forſake you? Are you caſt out of the ſynagogues? The LORD ſhall reveal himſelf to you, as to the man that was born blind? JESUS CHRIST ſhall take you up. If they carry you to priſon, and load you with chains, ſo that the iron enter into your ſouls, even there ſhall CHRIST ſend an angel from heaven to ſtrengthen you, and enable you, with *Paul* and *Silas*, to "ſing praiſes at midnight." Are you threatened to be thrown into a den of lions, or caſt into a burning fiery furnace, becauſe you will not bow down and worſhip the beaſt? Fear not; the GOD, whom you ſerve, is able to deliver you: or, if he ſhould ſuffer the flames to devour your bodies, they would only ſerve, as ſo many fiery chariots, to carry your ſouls to GOD. Thus it was with the martyrs of old; ſo that one, when he was burning, cried out, "Come, you Papiſts, if you want a miracle, here, behold one! This bed of flames is to me a bed of down." Thus it was with almoſt all that ſuffered in former times: for JESUS, notwithſtanding he withdrew his own divinity from himſelf, yet has always lifted up the light of his countenance upon the ſouls of ſuffering ſaints. "Fear not therefore thoſe that can kill the body, and after that have no more that they

can do; but fear Him only, who is able to deſtroy both body and ſoul in hell." Dare, dare to live godly in CHRIST JESUS, though you ſuffer all manner of perſecution. But,

Fourthly, Are there any true miniſters of JESUS CHRIST here? You will not be offended if I tell you, that the words of the text are, in an eſpecial manner, applicable to you. *Paul* wrote them to *Timothy*; and we, of all men, that live godly in CHRIST JESUS, muſt expect to ſuffer the ſevereſt perſecution. *Satan* will endeavour to bruiſe our heels, let who will eſcape: and it has been the general way of GOD's providence, in times of perſecution, to permit the ſhepherds firſt to be ſmitten, before the ſheep are ſcattered. Let us not therefore ſhew that we are only hirelings, who care not for the ſheep; but, like the great Shepherd and Biſhop of ſouls, let us readily lay down our lives for the ſheep. Whilſt others are boaſting of their great preferments, let us rather glory in our great afflictions and perſecutions for the ſake of CHRIST. *Paul* rejoiced that he ſuffered afflictions and perſecutions at *Iconium* and *Lyſtra*: out of all, the LORD delivered him; out of all, the LORD will deliver us, and cauſe us hereafter to ſit down with him on thrones, when he comes to judge the twelve tribes of *Iſrael*.

I could proceed; but I am conſcious, in this part of my diſcourſe, I ought more particularly to ſpeak to myſelf, knowing that *Satan* has deſired to have me, that he may ſift me as wheat. Without a ſpirit of prophecy, we may eaſily diſcern the ſigns of the times. Perſecution is even at the doors: the tabernacle of the LORD is already driven into the wilderneſs: the ark of the LORD is fallen into the unhallowed hands of uncircumciſed *Philiſtines*. They have long ſince put us out of their ſynagogues, and high-prieſts have been calling on civil magiſtrates to exert their authority againſt the diſciples of the LORD. Men in power have been breathing out threatenings: we may eaſily gueſs what will follow, impriſonment and ſlaughter. The ſtorm has been gathering ſome time; it muſt break ſhortly. Perhaps it may fall on me firſt.

Brethren therefore, whether in the miniſtry or not, I beſeech you, "pray for me," that I may never ſuffer juſtly, as an evil-doer, but only for righteouſneſs ſake. O pray that I may not deny my LORD in any wiſe, but that I may joyfully follow him, both to priſon and to death, if he is pleaſed to call me to ſeal his truths with my blood. Be not aſhamed of CHRIST, or of his goſpel, though I ſhould become a priſoner of the LORD. Though I am bound, the word of GOD will not be bound: no; an open, an effectual door is opened for preaching the everlaſting goſpel, and men or devils ſhall never be able to prevail againſt it. Only pray, that, whether it be in life or death, CHRIST may be glorified in me: then I ſhall rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

And now, to whom ſhall I addreſs myſelf next?

Fifthly, To thoſe, who perſecute their neighbours for living godly in CHRIST JESUS. But, what ſhall I ſay to you? Howl and weep for the miſeries that ſhall come upon you: for a little while the LORD permits you to ride over the heads of his people; but, by and by, death will arreſt you, judgment will find you, and JESUS CHRIST ſhall put a queſtion to you, which will ſtrike you dumb, *Why perſecuted you Me?* You may plead your laws and your canons, and pretend what you do is out of zeal for GOD; but GOD ſhall diſcover the curſed hypocriſy and ſerpentine enmity of your hearts, and give you over to the tormentors. It is well, if in this life GOD does not ſend ſome mark upon you. He pleaded the cauſe of *Naboth*, when innocently condemned for blaſpheming GOD and the king; and our LORD ſent forth his armies, and deſtroyed the city of thoſe who killed the prophets, and ſtoned them that were ſent unto them. If you have a mind therefore to fill up the meaſure of your iniquities, go on, perſecute and deſpiſe the diſciples of the LORD: but know, "that for all theſe things, GOD ſhall bring you into judgment." Nay, thoſe you now perſecute, ſhall be in part your judges, and ſit on the right-hand of the Majeſty on high, whilſt you are dragged by infernal ſpirits into a lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, and

the ſmoke of your torment ſhall be aſcending up for ever and ever. Lay down therefore, ye rebels, your arms againſt the moſt high GOD, and no longer perſecute thoſe who live godly in CHRIST JESUS. The LORD will plead, the LORD will avenge, their cauſe. You may be permitted to bruiſe their heels, yet in the end they ſhall bruiſe your accurſed heads. I ſpeak not this, as though I were afraid of you; for I know in whom I have believed: only out of pure love I warn you, and becauſe I know not but JESUS CHRIST may make ſome of you veſſels of mercy, and ſnatch you, even you perſecutors, as fire-brands out of the fire. JESUS CHRIST came into the world to ſave ſinners, even perſecutors, the worſt of ſinners: his righteouſneſs is ſufficient for them; his Spirit is able to purify and change their hearts. He once converted *Saul:* may the ſame GOD magnify his power, in converting all thoſe who are cauſing the godly in CHRIST JESUS, as much as in them lies, to ſuffer perſecution! The LORD be with you all. Amen.

SERMON

SERMON LVI.

An Exhortation to the People of GOD not to be diſcouraged in their Way, by the Scoffs and Contempt of wicked Men.

HEBREWS iv. 9.

There remaineth therefore a Reſt to the People of GOD.

WHEN we conſider the perſecutions they are expoſed to, who live righteouſly and godly in this preſent world; it is amazing to conſider, that the people of this generation ſhould be ſo fond of a name to live, while they are in effect dead. The people of GOD are to expect little elſe but troubles and trials while they are in this world; common experience is a contradiction to my text, that there is a reſt to the people of GOD; but the author of the *Hebrews*, when ſpeaking of this reſt, did not mean that they ſhould have a reſt here. No; he too well knew that the people of GOD, all who would ſeek and ſerve the LORD JESUS, muſt be deſpiſed, hated, ſcoffed, ſlandered, and evil intreated; but the time was haſtening when they ſhould have a perfect reſt: there is a reſt laid up for them, and this is an encouragement for you, my brethren, to hold on, and hold out your way rejoicing; after death there will be a reſt for ever; at judgment, you ſhall be taken up to dwell with the LORD JESUS CHRIST; and there, you ſhall be for ever exempted from ſin; you ſhall reſt from all

all manner of ſorrow, and be no more troubled with the temptations of Satan. Now, you can ſet about nothing for the glory of GOD, or for your own ſoul's welfare, but the devil is diſſuading you from it, or diſtracting you in it, or diſcouraging you after it. Here we are ſcoffed and derided; as the world hated the LORD JESUS CHRIST, ſo will it hate you: but be not diſcouraged, though we are here the ſcorn and off-ſcouring of all things; and are as a gazing ſtock to men and angels. Though they put us out of their ſynagogues, caſt out our name as evil, and look on us as perſons unfit for their company; yet, in that reſt which is prepared for you, my brethren, we ſhall then be gazed at for our glory, and they ſhut out of the aſſembly of the ſaints, and ſeparated from us, whether they will or no; unleſs the LORD JESUS CHRIST, by his free, rich, and ſovereign grace, brings them unto himſelf.

The letter-learned Scribes and Phariſees of this day, look on us as madmen and enthuſiaſts; but though they make ſo much noiſe about the word *enthuſiaſt*, it means no more than this, one in GOD; and what chriſtian can ſay, he is not in GOD, and GOD in him? And if this is to be an enthuſiaſt, GOD grant I may be more and more ſo; if we being in CHRIST, and CHRIST in us, makes us enthuſiaſts, I would to GOD we were all more and more enthuſiaſts. They now think it ſtrange, that we run not with them into all exceſs of riot, and becauſe we will not go to the devil's diverſions with them, therefore they ſpeak evil of us. We cannot now go along the ſtreet, but every one is pointing out his finger with ſcorn, and cries, Here comes another of his followers; what! you are become one of his diſciples too! But there is a reſt which will be a complete deliverance for you. Let none of theſe things move you; for, though you are thus treated here, conſider, you ſhall in heaven have no diſcouraging company, nor any but what will be an aſſiſtance to you; you will have no ſcoffer there, all will be ready to join with heart and voice in your everlaſting joy and praiſes. You will not be counted enthuſiaſts, madmen, and rabble, in that reſt which remaineth

for

for the people of GOD. Therefore, poſſeſs your ſouls in patience; account it matter of joy when you fall into tribulation; GOD, in his own time, will deliver us; let not their hindering us from preaching in the church, be any diſcouragement; do not ſhrink, and draw back, becauſe of oppoſition; be not aſhamed of your work or maſter; but hold faſt your integrity. You muſt expect to go through evil report, and good report; fear not the violence of unreaſonable men; let them hate you, and caſt you out for the LORD's ſake, behold he ſhall appear to your joy, and they ſhall be aſhamed: therefore hold on, and hold out to the end. Be ſtedfaſt and patient, and bear the troubles of the world; if you are the people of GOD, there is a reſt provided for you, which you ſhall certainly obtain.

I ſhall not ſpeak unto you, Phariſees, this morning, nor to any, except to you who have experienced the pangs of the new-birth, or are at preſent under them, and who know what it is to love the LORD JESUS in ſincerity and truth: do not be diſcouraged, or think hard of the ways of GOD, my dear brethren, becauſe you are not loved by the men of this world; if you were of the world it would love you; it would then be pleaſed with your company; it would not thruſt you from a tavern, or an alehouſe; it would not diſlike you for ſinging the ſongs of the drunkard, or for going to plays, balls, or other polite and faſhionable entertainments, as they are called; no, theſe the children of the world like; but if you will ſing hymns and pſalms, and go to hear what GOD hath to ſay unto your ſouls, and ſpend your time in reading, praying, and frequenting religious aſſemblies, then it is that they diſlike you, and thruſt you out of their company, as unworthy thereof; but let none of theſe things move you, for the reſt which JESUS CHRIST hath prepared for you, is an ample recompence for all you may meet with here.

This reſt is the fruit of the blood of the LORD JESUS CHRIST: O how will it fill our ſouls with love, to think that through the ſtreams of this blood, we have overcome the violence

violence of the world, and the ſnares of the devil. My dear brethren, be not diſcouraged at the treatment you meet with here, but let it be a means to ſtir you up to advance in the love of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath prepared a reſt for you. Can you conſider, what CHRIST has done and ſuffered for you, and have your hearts ſtupified with vile and ſenſeleſs pleaſures? Can you hear of a panting, bleeding, dying JESUS, and yet be dull and unaffected? Was there any ſorrow like unto his ſorrow? and all this, he underwent to ſave you, who were vile, and polluted, and by nature, ſince the fall, a motly mixture of the beaſt and devil. JESUS CHRIST, by dying upon the croſs, intended to take away the devil and beaſt from your heart, and to prepare it for himſelf to dwell in. Think of the love of this your JESUS, and then, will a little reproach and ſcorn move you? ſure it will not. I hope better things of you, and things that accompany ſalvation.

O think with what pleaſing aſtoniſhment you will ſee the LORD JESUS CHRIST, when he comes to take you to his reſt: now his heart is open to us; but our hearts are ſhut againſt him; then, then, his heart ſhall be open, and ours ſhall be ſo too. O my brethren, how will your love be increaſed? With what raptures will you ſee the LORD JESUS CHRIST? Therefore, undergo a few reproaches here patiently, and revile not again. Let them ſay what they pleaſe of me, the reproaches, ſcorns, and contempt of this world, will no ways hurt me, but will recoil upon their own heads; leave it to the LORD, who knows what is beſt for you and me: do not queſtion his love; he will be with you; only do you, who have taſted the LORD to be gracious, follow hard after him.

And now, let me ſpeak a word unto you, who have not yet experienced the love of CHRIST to your ſouls, but are waiting for his appearance. I ſhall be but very ſhort, becauſe I would not break in upon the duties of the day.

I ſhall

I ſhall ſpeak unto you a word of invitation; even, to wait ſtill on the LORD; do not forſake him, though he may not anſwer your petitions at once or twice ſeeking unto him; hold on, do not leave ſeeking him, and you ſhall have an anſwer of peace; remember the poor man who was lame, and had lain at the pool of *Bethesda* thirty-eight years for relief, yet at laſt he found that it was worth waiting for, he obtained his deſire.

And if you are but zealous for the LORD, and ſeek unto JESUS, if your zeal be according to godlineſs, and you pray unto him for his Spirit, you ſhall certainly have an anſwer of peace; you ſhall find it is good to ſeek unto the LORD, you will be adopted into his family, and by his ſpirit be enabled to cry, "Abba, Father." O then do not leave, but be continually waiting at wiſdom's gate, and you ſhall find all her ways to be ways of pleaſantneſs, and all her paths are peace; then, you ſhall find that it is worth waiting on the LORD JESUS; and when you have got his Spirit within you, all the power of men or devils cannot make you forſake the ways of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

If you do but once taſte of his pardoning love, it will be ſo delightful unto you, that you will cry for more and more thereof; you will be as full as you can hold, and ſtill not be ſatisfied; you will deſire more and more of this love of JESUS, you will hunger and thirſt, and hunger and thirſt again, and never be ſatisfied till you come to that reſt which is prepared for the people of GOD, where all hungering and thirſting will ceaſe, and will be turned into ſongs and hallelujahs, and that for ever and ever.

As many of you as deſign to partake of the emblems of the body and blood of our dying LORD, examine well yourſelves, leſt by eating and drinking unworthily, you eat and drink damnation unto yourſelves: remember the dying love of your dying LORD, and eat and drink in commemoration

thereof; do not let the world keep you from partaking hereof; and when you have eaten and drank, do not go away and run into the world; let the world ſee that you have been with JESUS; give them no room to ſpeak unſeemly, they do that enough without occaſion; but how would they rejoice if they had juſt reaſon.

Look well then unto your paths, that you do not ſlip; remember that all your faults are magnified, and that all your little ſlips are laid upon me; therefore, look well unto your ways, your words, your actions, that they may ſilence gainſayers; let them ſee that we have the preſence of GOD with us, and that there has been good done by field-preaching.

Let me exhort you once more to conſider the love of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. O do not forget his love. Conſider, I beſeech you, how great it has been unto you, and do not ſlight this his grace, the riches, the love, the kindneſs of your dear Redeemer, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, who hath prepared this eternal reſt for you; he alſo laid down his life for your ſakes: what great love was here! that while you were enemies to the LORD of glory, he died for you, to redeem you from ſin, from hell and wrath, that you might live and reign with him, world without end.

The Lamb that died, and was buried, is now riſen and exalted, and ſits on the right-hand of GOD the Father; and when he ſhall come to judge all the world, then, my brethren, it will be ſeen whether we have deſerved the uſage the world has given us; then it will be known who are the true followers of the LORD JESUS, and who are madmen and fools; but, may it be determined in this world, that we and our preſent enemies may enter into that reſt which GOD hath prepared for thoſe that love him.

Which GOD of his infinite mercy grant!

My

My brethren, let not theſe few words of exhortation be forgotten, but lay them up in your hearts, and remember they muſt be called over another day. I ſhould have enlarged, but the duties of the day obliged me to forbear.

Now, to GOD the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, be all power, &c.

SERMON

SERMON LVII.

Preached before the Governor, and Council, and the Houſe of Aſſembly, in *Georgia*, on January 28, 1770.

ZECH. iv. 10.

For who hath deſpiſed the Day of ſmall Things?

MEN, brethren, and fathers, at ſundry times and in divers manners, GOD ſpake to the fathers by the prophets, before he ſpoke to us in theſe laſt days by his Son. And as GOD is a ſovereign agent, and his ſacred Spirit bloweth when and where it liſteth, ſurely he may reveal and make known his will to his creatures, when, where, and how he pleaſeth; "and who ſhall ſay unto him, what doeſt thou?" Indeed, this ſeems to be one reaſon, to diſplay his ſovereignty, why he choſe, before the canon of ſcripture was ſettled, to make known his mind in ſuch various methods, and to ſuch a variety of his ſervants and meſſengers.

Hence it is, that we hear, he talked with *Abraham* as "a man talketh with a friend." To *Moſes* he ſpoke "face to face." To others by "dreams in the night," or by "viſions" impreſſed ſtrongly on their imaginations. This ſeems to be frequently the happy lot of the favourite evangelical prophet *Zechariah*, I call him *evangelical prophet*, becauſe his predictions, however they pointed at ſome approaching or immediate event, ultimately terminated in Him, who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the

end of all the lively oracles of GOD. The chapter from which our text is ſelected, among many other paſſages, is a ſtriking proof of this: An angel, that had been more than once ſent to him on former occaſions, appears again to him, and by way of viſion, and "waked him, (to uſe his own words) as a man that is wakened out of his ſleep." Prophets, and the greateſt ſervants of GOD, need waking ſometimes out of their drowſy frames.

Methinks I ſee this man of GOD ſtarting out of his ſleep, and being all attention: the angel aſked him, "what ſeeſt thou?" He anſwers, "I have looked, and behold, a candleſtick all of gold," an emblem of the church of GOD, "with a bowl upon the top of it, and ſeven lamps thereon, and ſeven pipes to the ſeven lamps, which were upon the top thereof;" implying, that the church, however reduced to the loweſt ebb, ſhould be preſerved, be kept ſupplied, and ſhining, through the inviſible, but not leſs real, becauſe inviſible aids and operations of the bleſſed Spirit of GOD. The occaſion of ſuch an extraordinary viſion, if we compare this paſſage with the ſecond chapter of the Prophecy of the prophet *Haggai*, ſeems to be this: It was now near eighteen years ſince the *Jewiſh* people had been delivered from their long and grievous *Babyloniſh* captivity; and being ſo long deprived of their temple and its worſhip, which fabric had been raſed even to the ground, one would have imagined, that immediately upon their return, they ſhould have poſtponed all private works, and with their united ſtrength have firſt ſet about rebuilding that once ſtately and magnificent ſtructure. But they, like too many chriſtians of a like lukewarm ſtamp, though all acknowledged that this church-work was a neceſſary work, yet put themſelves and others off, with this godly pretence, "The time is not come, the time that the LORD's houſe ſhould be built." The time is not come! what, not in eighteen years! for ſo long had they now been returned from their ſtate of bondage: and pray, why was not the time come? The prophet *Haggai* tells them; their whole time was ſo taken up in building for themſelves cieled houſes, that they had no time left to build

an habitation for their great and glorious Benefactor, the mighty God of *Jacob*.

This ingratitude muſt not be paſſed by unpuniſhed. Omniſcience obſerves, Omnipotence reſents it! And that they might read their ſin in their puniſhment, as they thought it beſt to get rich; and ſecure houſes and lands and eſtates for themſelves, before they ſet about unneceſſary church-work; the prophet tells them; "You have ſown much, but bring in little: ye eat, but ye have not enough: ye drink; but ye are not filled with drink: ye clothe you, but there is none warm: and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes." Still he goes on thundering and lightening, "Ye looked for much, and lo it came to little: and when ye brought it home, (pleaſing yourſelves with your fine crops) I did blow upon it: why? ſaith the LORD of Hoſts; becauſe of mine houſe that is waſte, and ye run every man unto his own houſe." A thundering ſermon this! delivered not only to the common people, but alſo unto, and in the preſence of "*Zerubbabel*, the ſon of *Shealtiel*, governor of *Judah*, and to *Joſhua*, the ſon of *Joſedech* the high-prieſt. The prophet's report is believed; and the arm of the LORD was revealed. *Zerubbabel*, the ſon of *Shealtiel*, and *Joſhua*, the ſon of *Joſedech*, (O happy times when church and ſtate are thus combined) with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their GOD; and the words of *Haggai* the prophet."

The ſpirit of *Zerubbabel*, and of *Joſhua*, and the ſpirits of all the remnant of the people were ſtirred up, and they immediately came, diſregarding, as it were, their own private buildings; "and did work in the houſe of the LORD of Hoſts their GOD." For a while, they proceeded with vigour; the foundation of the houſe is laid; and the ſuperſtructure raiſed to ſome conſiderable height: but whether this fit of hot zeal ſoon cooled, as is too common; or the people were diſcouraged by the falſe repreſentations of their enemies, which perhaps met with too favourable a reception at the court of *Darius*; it ſo happened, that the hearts of

the magiſtrates and miniſters of the people waxed faint; and an awful chaſm intervened, between the finiſhing and laying the foundation of this promiſing and glorious work.

Upon this, another prophet, even *Zechariah*, (who with *Haggai* had been joint ſufferer in the captivity) is ſent to lift up the hands that hang down, to ſtrengthen the feeble knees, and by the foregoing inſtructive viſion, to reanimate *Joſhua* and the people in general, and the heart of *Zerubbabel*, the ſon of *Shealtiel*, in particular, maugre all diſcouragements, either from inveterate enemies, or from timid unſtable friends, or all other obſtacles whatſoever. If *Haggai* thunders, *Zechariah's* meſſage is as lightening. "This is the word of the LORD unto *Zerubbabel*, ſaying, Not by might, nor by power, (not by barely human power or policy) but by my ſpirit, ſaith the LORD of Hoſts: Who art thou, O great mountain? (thou *Sanballat* and thy aſſociates, who have been ſo long crying out, what mean theſe feeble *Jews?* however great, formidable, and ſeemingly inſurmountable) before *Zerubbabel* thou ſhalt (not only be lowered and rendered more acceſſible, but) become a plain;" thy very oppoſition ſhall, in the end, promote the work, and help to expedite that very building, which thou intendeſt to put a ſtop to, and deſtroy.

And leſt *Zerubbabel*, through unbelief and outward oppoſition, or for want of more bodily ſtrength, ſhould think this would be a work of time, and that he ſhould not live to ſee it compleated in his days, "The word of the LORD came to *Zechariah*, ſaying, The hands of *Zerubbabel* have laid the foundation of this houſe; his hands alſo ſhall finiſh it, and he ſhall bring forth the headſtone thereof with ſhoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." Grace! grace! unto it: a double acclamation, to ſhew, that out of the abundance of their hearts, their mouth ſpake; and this with ſhoutings and crying from all quarters. Even their enemies ſhould ſee the hand and providence of GOD in the beginning, continuance, and ending of this ſeemingly improbable and impracticable work; ſo that they ſhould be conſtrained to cry, "Grace unto

unto it," and wiſh both the work and the builders much proſperity; But as for its friends, they ſhould be ſo tranſported with heart-felt joy in the reflection upon the ſignal providences which had attended them through the whole proceſs, that they would ſhout and cry, "Grace, grace unto it:" or, This is nothing but the LORD's doing; GOD proſper and bleſs this work more and more, and make it a place where his free grace and glory may be abundantly diſplayed. Then by a beautiful and pungent ſarcaſm, turning to the inſulting enemies, he utters the ſpirited interrogation in my text, "Who hath deſpiſed the day of ſmall things?" Who are you, that vauntingly ſaid, what can theſe feeble *Jews* do, pretending to lay the foundation of a houſe which they never will have money, or ſtrength, or power to finiſh? Or, who are you, O timorous, ſhort-ſighted, doubting, though well-meaning people, who, through unbelief, were diſcouraged at the ſmall beginnings and feebleneſs of the attempt to build a ſecond temple? And, becauſe you thought it could not come up to the magnificence of the firſt, therefore were diſcouraged from ſo much as beginning to build a ſecond at all?

A cloſe inſtructive queſtion this; a queſtion, implying, that whenever GOD intends to bring about any great thing, he generally begins with a day of ſmall things.

As a proof of this, I will not lead you ſo far back, as to the beginning of time, when the Everlaſting "I AM" ſpoke all things into exiſtence, by his almighty *fiat*; and out of a confuſed chaos, "without form and void," produced a world worthy of a GOD to create, and of his favourite creature man, his vicegerent and repreſentative here below, to inhabit, and enjoy in it both himſelf and his GOD. And yet, though the heavens declare his glory, and the firmament ſheweth his handy work, though there is no ſpeech nor language where their voice is not heard, and their line is gone out through all the earth; and by a dumb, yet perſuaſive language, proves the hand that made them to be divine; yet there have been, and are now, ſuch fools in the

world, as to "ſay in their hearts, There is no GOD;" or ſo wiſe, as by their wiſdom, not to know GOD, or own his divine image to be ſtamped on that book, wherein theſe grand things are recorded, and that in ſuch legible characters, that he who runs may read.

Neither will I divert your attention, honoured fathers, to the hiſtories of *Greece* and *Rome*, or any of the great kingdoms and renowned monarchies, which conſtitute ſo great a part of ancient hiſtory; but whoſe beginnings were very ſmall, (witneſs *Romulus*'s ditch) their progreſs as remarkably great, and their declenſion and downfal, when arrived at their appointed zenith, as ſudden, unexpected, and marvellous. Theſe make the chief ſubjects of the learning of our ſchools; though they make but a mean figure in ſacred hiſtory, and would not perhaps have been mentioned at all, had they not been, in ſome meaſure, connected with the hiſtory of GOD's people, which is the grand ſubject of that much deſpiſed book, emphatically called, The Scriptures. Whoever hath a mind to inform himſelf of the one, may read *Rollin*'s Ancient Hiſtory, and whoever would ſee the connection with the other, may conſult the learned *Prideaux*'s admirable and judicious connection. Books which, I hope, will be ſtrenuouſly recommended, and carefully ſtudied, when this preſent infant inſtitution gathers more ſtrength, and grows up into a ſeat of learning. I can hardly forbear mentioning the ſmall beginnings of *Great Britain*, now ſo diſtinguiſhed for liberty, opulence and renown; and the riſe and rapid progreſs of the *American* colonies, which promiſes to be one of the moſt opulent and powerful empires in the world. But my preſent views, and the honours done this infant inſtitution this day, and the words of my text, as well as the feelings of my own heart, and I truſt, of the hearts of all that hear me, lead me to confine your meditations to the hiſtory of GOD's own peculiar people, which for the ſimplicity and ſublimity of its language, the veracity of its author, and the importance and wonders of the facts therein recorded, if weighed in a proper balance, hath not its equal under the ſun. And yet, though GOD himſelf hath become

an

an author among us, we will not condeſcend to give his book one thorough reading. Be aſtoniſhed, O heavens, at this!

Who would have thought that from one, even from *Abraham*, and from ſo ſmall a beginning, as the emigration of a ſingle private family, called out of a land wholly given to idolatry, to be ſojourners and pilgrims in a ſtrange land; who would have thought, that from a man, who for a long ſeaſon was written *childleſs*, a man whoſe firſt poſſeſſion in this ſtrange land, was by purchaſing a burying place for his wife, and in whoſe grave one might have imagined he would have buried all future expectations; who would have thought, that from this very man and woman, according to the courſe of nature, both as good as dead, ſhould deſcend a numerous offspring like unto the ſtars of heaven for multitude, and as the ſand which is upon the ſea ſhore innumerable? Nay, who would have imagined, that againſt all probability, and in all human appearance impoſſible, a kingdom ſhould ariſe? Behold a poor captive ſlave, even *Joſeph*, who was cruelly ſeparated from his brethren, became ſecond in *Pharaoh*'s kingdom: he was ſent before to work out a great deliverance, and to introduce a family which ſhould take root, deep root downwards and bear fruit upwards, and fill the land. How could it enter into the heart of man to conceive, that when oppreſſed by a king, who knew not *Joſeph*, though they were the beſt, moſt loyal, induſtrious ſubjects this king had, when an edict was iſſued forth as impolitic as cruel, (ſince the ſafety and glory of all kingdoms chiefly conſiſt in the number of its inhabitants) that an outcaſt, helpleſs infant ſhould be taken, and bred up in all the learning of the *Egyptians*, and in that very court from which, and by that very tyrant from whom the edict came, and that the deliverer ſhould be nurtured to be king in *Jeſhurun*?

But time as well as ſtrength would fail me, was I to give you a detail of all the important particulars reſpecting GOD's peculiar people; as their miraculous ſupport in the wilderneſs, the events which took place while they were under a divine theocracy, and during their ſettlement in *Canaan* to the time

of their return from *Babylon*, and from thence to the deſtruction of their ſecond temple, &c. by the *Romans*. Indeed, conſidering to whom I am ſpeaking, perſons converſant in the ſacred and profane hiſtory, I have mentioned theſe things only to ſtir up your minds by way of remembrance.

But if we deſcend from the *Jewiſh*, to the Chriſtian æra, we ſhall find, that its commencement was, in the eyes of the world, a "day of ſmall things" indeed. Our bleſſed LORD compares the beginning of its progreſs in the world, to a grain of muſtard-ſeed, which though the ſmalleſt of all ſeeds when ſown, ſoon becomes a great tree, and ſo ſpread, that the "birds of the air," or a multitude of every nation, language and tongue, came and lodged in its branches: and its inward progreſs in the believers heart, CHRIST likens to a little leaven which a woman hid in three meaſures of meal. How both the *Jewiſh* and Chriſtian diſpenſations have been, and even to this day are deſpiſed, by the wiſe diſputers of this world, on this very account, is manifeſt to all who read the lively oracles with a becoming attention. What ridicule, obloquy, and inveterate oppoſition chriſtianity meets with, in this our day, not only from the open deiſt, but from formal profeſſors, is too evident to every truly pious ſoul.

And what oppoſition the kingdom of grace meets with in the heart, is well known by all thoſe who are experimentally acquainted with their hearts: they know, to their ſorrow, what the great apoſtle of the *Gentiles* means, by "the Spirit ſtriving againſt the fleſh, and the fleſh againſt the Spirit."

But the ſacred Oracles, and the hiſtories of all ages acquaint us, that GOD brings about the greateſt thing, not only by ſmall and unlikely means, but by ways and means directly oppoſite to the carnal reaſonings of unthinking men: he chuſes things that be not, to bring to nought thoſe which are. How did chriſtianity ſpread and flouriſh, by one, who was deſpiſed and rejected of men, a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief, and who expired on a croſs? he was deſpiſed and rejected, not merely by the vulgar and

illiterate, but the Rabbies and Maſters of *Iſrael*, the Scribes and Phariſees, who by the *Jewiſh* churchmen were held too in ſo high a reputation for their outward ſanctity, that it became a common proverb, "If only two went to heaven, the one would be a Scribe, and the other a Phariſee." Yet there were they who endeavoured to ſilence the voice of all his miracles and heavenly doctrine with, "Is not this the Carpenter's ſon?" Nay, "He is mad, why hear you him? he hath a devil, and caſteth out devils by *Beelzebub* the prince of the devils." And their deſpite not only followed him to, but after death, and when in his grave. "We remember (ſaid they) that this deceiver ſaid, after three days I will riſe again; command therefore that the ſepulchre be made ſure;" but, maugre all your impotent precautions, in ſealing the ſtone, and ſetting a watch, he burſt the bars of death aſunder, and, according to his repeated predictions, proved himſelf to be the Son of GOD with power, by riſing the third day from the dead. And afterwards, in preſence of great multitudes, was he received up into glory; as a proof thereof, he ſent down the Holy Ghoſt, (on the miſſion of whom he pawned all his credit with his diſciples) in ſuch an inſtantaneous, amazing manner, as one would imagine, ſhould have forced and compelled all who ſaw it to own, that this was indeed the finger of GOD.

And yet how was this grand tranſaction treated? with the utmoſt contempt: when inſtantaneouſly the apoſtles commenced orators and linguiſts, and with a divine profuſion ſpoke of the wonderful things of GOD; "theſe men (ſaid ſome) are full of new wine." And yet by theſe men, mean fiſhermen, illiterate men, idiots, in the opinion of the Scribes and Phariſees, and notwithſtanding all the oppoſition of earth and hell, and that too only by the fooliſhneſs of preaching, did this grain of muſtard-ſeed grow up, till thouſands, ten thouſands of thouſands, a multitude which no man can number, out of every nation, language and people, came and lodged under the branches of it.

Neither ſhall it reſt here; whatever dark parentheſis may intervene, we are aſſured, that being ſtill watered by the ſame

ſame divine hand, it ſhall take deeper and deeper root downward, and bear more and more fruit upward, till the whole earth be filled with the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the ſea. Who ſhall live when GOD doth this? Haſten O LORD that bleſſed time! O let this thy kingdom come! Come, not only by the external preaching of the goſpel in the world, but by its renovating, heart-renewing, ſoul-transforming power, to awakened ſinners! For want of this, alas! alas! though we underſtood all myſteries, could ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels, we ſhould be only like ſounding braſs, or ſo many tinkling cymbals.

And yet, what a "day of ſmall things" is the firſt implantation of the ſeed of divine life in the ſoul of man? Well might our LORD, who alone is the author and finiſher of our faith, compare it to a little leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three meaſures of meal, till the whole was leavened. Low ſimilies, mean compariſons theſe, in the eyes of thoſe, who having eyes, ſee not; who having ears, hear not; whoſe heart, being waxed groſs, cannot, will not underſtand! To ſuch, it is deſpicable, myſterious, and unintelligible in its deſcription; and, if poſſible, infinitely more ſo, when made effectual by the power of GOD, to the ſalvation of any individual ſoul. For the wiſdom of GOD will always be fooliſhneſs to natural men. As it was formerly, ſo it is now; they who are born after the fleſh, will perſecute thoſe that are born after the ſpirit: the diſciple muſt be as his maſter: they that will live godly in him; they that live *moſt godly* in him, muſt, ſhall ſuffer perſecution. This is ſo interwoven in the very nature and exiſtence of the goſpel, that our LORD makes it one part of the beatitudes, in that bleſſed ſermon which he preached, when, to uſe the words of my old familiar friend the ſeraphic *Hervey*, a mount was his pulpit, and the heavens his ſounding board. A part, which, like others of the ſame nature, I believe, will be little reliſhed by ſuch who are always clamouring againſt thoſe few highly favoured ſouls, who dare ſtand up and preach the doctrine of *juſtification by faith alone* in the imputed righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST, and are reproached with not preaching, like their maſter, *Morality*, as they

they term it, in his glorious ſermon on the mount: for did we more preach, and more live it, we ſhould ſoon find all manner of evil would be ſpoken againſt us for CHRIST's ſake.

But ſhall this hinder the progreſs, the growth, and conſummation? and ſhall the chriſtian therefore be diſmayed and diſcouraged? GOD forbid! On the contrary, the weakeſt believer may, and ought, to rejoice and be exceeding glad. And why? for a very good reaſon; becauſe, he that hath begun the good work, hath engaged alſo to finiſh it; though CHRIST found him as black as hell, he ſhall preſent him, and every individual purchaſed with his blood, without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing, before the Divine Preſence. O glorious proſpect! how will the ſaints triumph, and the ſons of GOD then ſhout for joy? If they ſhouted when GOD ſaid, "Let there be light, and there was light;" and if there is joy in heaven over one ſinner only that repenteth, how will the heavenly arches echo and rebound with praiſe, when all the redeemed of the LORD ſhall appear together, and the Son of GOD ſhall ſay, "of all theſe that thou haſt given to me, have I loſt nothing." On the contrary, what weeping, wailing, and gnaſhing of teeth will there be, not only amongſt the devil and his angels, but amongſt the fearful and unbelieving, when they ſee that all the helliſh temptations and devices, inſtead of deſtroying, were over-ruled to the furtherance of the goſpel in general, and to the increaſe and growth of grace in every individual believer in particular. And how will deſpiſers then behold and wonder and periſh, when they ſhall be obliged to ſay, "we fools counted their lives madneſs, and their end to be without honour; but how are they numbered among the children of GOD, and how happy is their lot among the ſaints!"

But whither am I going? Pardon me, my dear hearers, if you think this to be a digreſſion from my main point. It is true, whilſt I am muſing, the fire begins to kindle: I am flying, but not ſo high, I truſt, as to loſe ſight of my main ſubject. And yet, after meditating and talking of the riſe and

and progreſs of the goſpel of the kingdom, I ſhall find it ſomewhat difficult to deſcend ſo low, as to entertain you with the ſmall beginnings of this infant colony, and of the Orphan-houſe, in which I am now preaching. But I ſhould judge myſelf inexcuſable on this occaſion, if I did not detain you a little longer, in taking a tranſient view of the traces of divine Providence, in the riſe and progreſs of the colony in general, and the inſtitution of this Orphan-houſe in particular. Children yet unborn, I truſt, will have occaſion to bleſs GOD for both.

The very deſign of this ſettlement, as charity inclines us to hope all things, was, that it might be an Aſylum, and a place of buſineſs, for as many as were in diſtreſs; for foreigners, as well as natives; for *Jews* and *Gentiles*. On *February* 1, a day, the memory of which, I think, ſhould ſtill be perpetuated, the firſt embarkation was made with forty-five *Engliſh* families; men, who had once lived well in their native country, and who, with many perſecuted *Saltzburghers*, headed by a good old ſoldier of JESUS lately deceaſed, the Rev. Mr. *Boltzius*, came to find a refuge here. They came, they ſaw, they laboured, and endeavoured to ſettle; but by an eſſential, though well-meant defect, in the very beginning of the ſettlement, too well known by ſome now preſent, and too long, and too much felt to bear repeating, prohibiting the importation and uſe of negroes, &c. their numbers gradually diminiſhed, and matters were brought to ſo low an ebb, that the whole colony became a proverb of reproach.

About this time, in the year 1737, being previouſly ſtirred up thereto by a ſtrong impulſe, which I could by no means reſiſt, I came here, after the example of my worthy and reverend friends, Meſſieurs *John* and *Charles Weſley*, and Mr. *Ingham*, who, with the moſt diſintereſted views, had come hither to ſerve the colony, by endeavouring to convert the *Indians*. I came rejoicing to ſerve the colony alſo, and to become your willing ſervant for CHRIST's ſake. My friend and father, good Biſhop *Benſon*, encouraged me, though my brethren and kinſmen after the fleſh, as well as religious

religious friends, oppoſed it. I came, and I ſaw (you will not be offended with me to ſpeak the truth) the nakedneſs of the land. Gladly did I diſtribute about the four hundred pounds ſterling, which I had collected in *England*, among my poor pariſhioners. The neceſſity and propriety of erecting an Orphan-houſe, was mentioned and recommended before my firſt embarkation. But thinking it a matter of too great importance to be ſet about unwarily, I deferred the farther proſecution of this laudable deſign till my return to *England* in the year 1738, for to have prieſts orders.

Miſerable was the condition of many grown perſons, as well as children, whom I left behind. Their cauſe I endeavoured to plead, immediately upon my arrival; but being denied the churches, in which I had the year before collected many hundreds for the *London* charity-ſchools, I endeavoured to plead their cauſe in the fields. The people threw in their mites moſt willingly; once or twice, I think, twenty-two pounds were collected in copper; the alms were accompanied with many prayers, and which, as I told them, laid, I am perſuaded, a bleſſed foundation to the future charitable ſuperſtructure. In a ſhort time, though plucked as it were out of the fire, the collections and charitable contributions amounted to more than a one thouſand pounds ſterling.

With that I reimbarked, taking *Philadelphia* in my way, and upon my ſecond arrival, found the ſpot fixed upon; but, alas! who can deſcribe the low eſtate to which it was reduced! the whole country almoſt was left deſolate, and the metropolis *Savannah*, was but like a cottage in a vineyard, or as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers. Many orphans, whoſe parents had been taken from them by the diſtreſſes that naturally attend new ſettlements, were diſperſed here and there in a very forlorn helpleſs condition; my bowels yearned towards them, and, animated by the example of the great Profeſſor *Franck*, previous to bringing them here, I hired a houſe, furniſhed an infirmary, employed all that were capable of employment, and in a few weeks walked to the houſe of GOD with a large family of above ſixty orphans, and others in as bad a condition.

On

On *March* 25, 1740, in full aſſurance of faith, I laid the foundation of this houſe; and in the year following, brought in my orphan family, who, with the workmen, now made up the number of one hundred and fifty: by the money which was expended on theſe, the remaining few were kept in the colony, and were enabled to pay the debts they owed; ſo that in a repreſentation made to the Houſe of Commons, by ſome, who for very good reaſons wanted the conſtitution of the colony altered; they declared, that the very exiſtence of the colony was in a great meaſure, if not totally, owing to the building and ſupporting of the Orphan Houſe.

Finding the care of ſuch a family, incompatible with the care due to a pariſh, upon giving previous warning to the then truſtees, I gave up the living of *Savannah*, which without fee or reward I had voluntarily taken upon me: I then ranged through the northern colonies, and afterwards once more returned home. What calumny, what loads of reproach, I for many years was called to undergo, in thus turning beggar for a family, few here preſent need to be informed; a family, utterly unconnected by any ties of nature; a family, not only to be maintained with food, but cloathed and educated alſo, and that too in the deareſt part of his Majeſty's dominions, on a pine barren, and in a colony where the uſe of negroes was totally denied; this appeared ſo very improbable, that all beholders looked daily for its decline and annihilation.

But, bleſſed be GOD, the building advanced and flouriſhed, and the wiſhed-for period is now come; after having ſupported the family for thirty-two years, by a change of conſtitution and the ſmiles of government, with liberal donations from the northern, and eſpecially the adjacent provinces, the ſame hands that laid the foundation, are now called to finiſh it, by making an addition of a ſeat of learning, the whole products and profits of which, are to go towards the increaſe of the fund, as at the beginning, for deſtitute orphans, or ſuch youths as may be called of GOD to the ſacred miniſtry of his goſpel. I need not call on any here, to cry, "Grace, grace, unto

unto it." For on the utmoſt ſcrutiny of the intention of thoſe employed, and conſidering the various exerciſes they have been called to undergo, and the oppoſition the building hath every where met with, we may juſtly ſay, "not by might, "nor by power, but by thy Spirit, O LORD," hath this work been carried on thus far; it is his doing, let it be marvellous in our eyes. With humble gratitude, therefore, would we now ſet up our *Ebenezer*, and ſay, "Hitherto thou, LORD, "haſt helped us;" and wherefore ſhould we doubt, but that he, who hath thus far helped, will continue to help, when the weary heads of the firſt founders and preſent helpers, are laid in the ſilent grave.

I am very well aware, what an invidious taſk it muſt be to a perſon in my circumſtances, thus to ſpeak on an affair in which he hath been ſo much concerned. Some may perhaps think, I am become a fool in thus glorying. But as I am now, bleſſed be GOD, in the decline of life, and as, in all probability, I ſhall never be preſent to celebrate another anniverſary, I thought it beſt to be a little more explicit, that if I have ſpoken any thing but truth, I may be confronted; and if not, that future ages, and future ſucceſſors, may ſee with what a purity of intention, and what various interpoſitions of Providence, the work was begun, and hath been carried on to its *preſent height*.

It was the reading of a like account, written by the late Profeſſor *Franck*, that encouraged me: who knows but hereafter, the reading ſomething of a ſimilar nature, may encourage others to begin and carry on a like work elſewhere? I have ſaid its *preſent height*, for I would humbly hope, that this is, comparatively ſpeaking, only a "day of ſmall things," only the dawn of brighter ſcenes. Private genius's and individuals, as well as collective bodies, have, like the human body, the nonage, puerile, juvenile eſtate, before they arrive at their zenith, and their lives as gradually they decline. But yet I would hope, that both the province and *Betheſda*, are but in their puerile or juvenile ſtate. And long, long may they increaſe, and make large ſtrides, till they arrive at

a glorious

a glorious zenith! I mean not merely in trade, merchandiſe, and opulence, (though I would be far from ſecluding them from the province, and would be thankful for the advances it hath already made) but a zenith of glorious goſpel bleſſings, without which, all outward emoluments are leſs than nothing, or as the ſmall duſt of the balance: "For what ſhall it profit a man, if he ſhall gain the whole world and loſe his own ſoul."

Who can imagine, that the prophet *Zechariah* would be ſent to ſtrengthen the hands of *Zerubbabel*, in building and laying the foundation of the temple, if that temple was not to be frequented with worſhippers that worſhipped the Father in ſpirit and in truth. The moſt gaudy fabrics, ſtately temples, new moon ſabbaths, and ſolemn aſſemblies, are only ſolemn mockeries GOD cannot away with. This GOD hath ſhewn by the deſtruction of both the firſt and ſecond temples. What is become of the ſeven churches of *Aſia*? How are all their golden candleſticks overthrown? "GOD is a Spirit, and they who worſhip him muſt worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth." And no longer do I expect that this houſe will flouriſh, than when the power of religion is encouraged and promoted, and the perſons educated here, proſecute their ſtudies, not only to be great ſcholars, but good ſaints.

Bleſſed be GOD! I can ſay with Profeſſor *Franck*, that it is in a great meaſure owing to the diſintereſted ſpirit of my firſt fellow-helpers, as well as thoſe who are now employed, that the building hath reached to its preſent height. This I am bound to ſpeak, not only in honour to thoſe who are now with GOD, but thoſe at preſent before me. Nor dare I conclude, without offering to

Your Excellency, our pepper corn of acknowledgment for the countenance you have always ſhewn *Betheſda*'s inſtitution, and the honour you did us laſt year, in laying the firſt brick of yonder wings: in thus doing, you have honoured *Betheſda*'s GOD. May he long delight to honour you here on

on earth! and after a life ſpent to his glory, and your country's good, may he honour you to all eternity, in placing you at CHRIST's right-hand in the kingdom above!

Next to your Excellency, my dear Mr. Preſident, I muſt beg your acceptance both of thanks and congratulation on the annual return of this feſtival. For you was not only my dear familiar friend, and firſt fellow-traveller in this infant province; but you was directed by Providence to this ſpot, laid the ſecond brick of this houſe, watched, prayed, and wrought for the family's good: A witneſs of innumerable trials, partner of my joys and griefs; you will have now the pleaſure of ſeeing the Orphan-houſe a fruitful bough, its branches running over the wall. For this, no doubt, GOD hath ſmiled upon and bleſſed you, in a manner we could not expect, much leſs deſign; and may he continue to bleſs you with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in CHRIST JESUS. Look to the rock from whence you have been hewn, and may your children never be aſhamed, that their father left his native country, and married a real chriſtian, born again under this roof. May *Bethesda*'s GOD grant this may be the happy portion of your children, and children's children!

Gentlemen of his Majeſty's council,

Mr. Speaker, and you members of the General Aſſembly, many thanks are owing to you, for your late addreſs to his Excellency in favour of *Bethesda*. Your joint recommendation of it, when I was laſt here, which, though in ſome meaſure through the bigotry of ſome, for the preſent is rendered abortive, by their wanting to have it confined to a party, yet I truſt the event will prove that every thing ſhall be over-ruled to the furtherance of the work. Here I repeat, what I have often declared, that as far as lies in my power before and after my deceaſe, *Bethesda* ſhall be always on a *broad bottom*. All denominations have freely given; all denominations, all the continent, GOD being my helper, ſhall receive benefit from it. May *Bethesda*'s GOD bleſs you all!

in your private as well as public capacity; and as you are honoured to be the repreſentatives of a now flouriſhing increaſing people: may you be directed in all your ways! May truth, juſtice, religion, and piety be eſtabliſhed amongſt you through all generations!

Laſtly, My reverend brethren, and you inhabitants of the colony, accept unfeigned thanks for the honour done me, in letting us ſee you at *Bethesda* this day. You, Sir, for the ſermon preached here laſt year. Tell it in *Germany*, tell my great, good friend, Profeſſor *Franck*, that *Bethesda*'s GOD, is a GOD whoſe mercy endureth for ever. O let us have your earneſt prayers! encourage your people not to "deſpiſe the day of ſmall things." What hath GOD wrought? From its infancy, this colony hath been bleſſed with many faithful goſpel miniſters: O that this may be a nurſery to many more! This hath been the caſe of the *New England* College for almoſt a century, and why not the Orphan-houſe Academy at *Georgia*?

Men, brethren, fathers, as many of you, whether inhabitants or ſtrangers, who have honoured this day with your preſence, give us the additional bleſſings of your prayers. And O that *Bethesda*'s GOD may make this day, though but a day of ſmall things, productive of great things to the ſouls of all amongſt whom I have been now preaching the kingdom of GOD. A great and good day will it be indeed, if JESUS CHRIST, our great *Zerubbabel*, ſhould, by the power of the eternal Spirit, bleſs any thing that hath now been ſaid, to cauſe every mountain of difficulty, that lies in the way of your converſion, to become a plain. And what art thou, O great mountain, whether the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, or the pride of life, ſin, or ſelf-righteouſneſs? Before our *Bethesda*'s GOD, thou ſhalt become a plain.

Brethren, my heart is enlarged towards you: it is written, bleſſed be GOD that it is written, "In the name of JESUS every knee ſhall bow, whether things in heaven, or things

in earth, or things under the earth." O that we may be made a willing people in the day of his power! Look, look unto him, all ye that are placed in theſe ends of the earth. This houſe hath often been an houſe of GOD, a gate of heaven, to ſome of your fathers. May it be a houſe of GOD, a gate of heaven, to the children alſo! Come unto him, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, he will give you reſt; reſt from the guilt, reſt from the power, reſt from the puniſhment of ſin; reſt from the fear of divine judgments here, reſt with himſelf eternally hereafter. Fear not, though the beginnings are but ſmall, CHRIST will not deſpiſe the day of ſmall things. A bruiſed reed will he not break, and the ſmoaking flax will he not quench, until he bring forth judgment unto victory. His hands that laid the foundation, alſo ſhall finiſh it: yet a little while and the top-ſtone ſhall be brought forth with ſhouting, and men and angels join in crying, "Grace! Grace! unto it." That all preſent may be in this happy number, may GOD of his infinite mercy grant, through JESUS our LORD.

SERMON LVIII.

Peter's Denial of his LORD.

MATTHEW xxvi. 75. *

And Peter remembered the words of Jeſus, which ſaid unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou ſhalt deny me thrice: and he went out, and wept bitterly.

BIOGRAPHY, as one obſerves, is the beſt hiſtory; or, in other words, writing or reading the lives of great and good men, is one of the moſt profitable and delightful kinds of hiſtory we can entertain ourſelves with. For hereby we are convinced, that Wiſdom's ways are indeed ways of pleaſantneſs; and being proved to be practicable by men of like paſſions with ourſelves, we are inſenſibly allured to follow them as they followed *Chriſt*, and encouraged to run with patience the race ſet before us. This, one would hope, is the grand end propoſed by all ſuch who undertake to draw the characters, or hand down to poſterity the remarkable tranſactions of perſons who have ſhone as lights in the church of GOD. Many have done worthily in this reſpect; and for this their labour of love, thouſands as yet unborn, ſhall riſe

* The two following Sermons came to hand after the others were in the preſs.

revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Not content with this, he adds, "Thou art *Peter*, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell ſhall never be able to prevail againſt it:" Words that carry with them the ſtrongeſt preſumption; not only that *Peter* was a converted man, but that he had ſome eminent place to be aſſigned him in the kingdom of grace. For our Lord pronounces him bleſſed: "Bleſſed art thou, *Simon Bar Jonah*:" and gives him a reaſon for it; "For fleſh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my heavenly Father." So that *Peter* called CHRIST Lord by the Holy Ghoſt, which none but a converted perſon can do. And further, "Upon this rock, ſays CHRIST, will I build my church;" which, whether it be underſtood of his confeſſion of CHRIST's divinity, or his being afterwards to be employed in firſt preaching the goſpel to the *Gentiles*, ſeems to denote ſome peculiar favour and honour aſſigned to, and hereafter to be conferred upon him. It is true, indeed, the ſame all-ſeeing Redeemer, when afterwards he forewarned him of his fall, ſubjoined this particular command; "And when thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren." But this only implies, that his fall would be ſo exceeding great, that his recovery out of it would be, as it were, a ſecond converſion.

The ſteps that led to this terrible diſaſter, come now more particularly to be conſidered. In order to be informed of theſe, (as I take it for granted you have brought your Bibles with you) I muſt beg you to look back to the 33d verſe of this chapter, where we ſhall find, that ſpiritual pride, and a too great dependence on a ſtock of grace already received, was one of the firſt ſteps diſcernible in this Apoſtle's denial of his LORD.——The bleſſed JESUS, knowing all things that ſhould befal him, after the ſolemn inſtitution and celebration of his laſt ſupper, gave his diſciples this tremendous warning, backed with a ſcripture prediction: "All ye (ver. 31.) ſhall be

If any ſhould enquire, "Why all this caution?" I anſwer, "We are about to diſcourſe on the Apoſtle *Peter's* "ſhameful denial of his and our bleſſed Lord and Saviour "JESUS CHRIST." A paſſage recorded by all the evangeliſts, St. *Mark* himſelf not excepted, who is ſuppoſed to have been amanuenſis to St. *Peter*, and to have taken his goſpel from *Peter's* own mouth. A proof this, not only of the impartiality of the ſacred writers, but alſo that the Holy Ghoſt intended that this awful ſtory ſhould, in an eſpecial manner, be recorded for our learning, on whom the ends of the world are come. But though all the evangeliſts are very explicit in relating this perfidious and wicked act, yet we ſhall chiefly confine ourſelves, at preſent, to the account given us of it in this xxvith chapter of St. *Matthew*, and, for method ſake, purpoſe to conſider,

Firſt, The ſteps that led to this great man's fall.

Secondly, The fall itſelf. And,

Thirdly, His recovery from it, mentioned in the text: "And *Peter* remembered the words of JESUS, which ſaid unto him, Before the cock crow, thou ſhalt deny me thrice. And he went out and wept bitterly."

But before we proceed to the proſecution of theſe points, it may be proper to premiſe, that we take it for granted the Apoſtle *Peter*, before his fall, was certainly a converted man. This is controverted by ſome. For what reaſon, is beſt known to themſelves. The ſcriptures evidently leave us no room for diſpute in. One paſſage may ſuffice for a proof. "Bleſſed art thou, *Simon Bar Jonah*! (ſaid the glorious *Emmanuel* to *Peter*, when he witneſſed that good confeſſion, Thou art CHRIST, the Son of the living GOD); for fleſh and blood hath not

But to proceed. Spiritual ſloth, as well as ſpiritual pride, helped to throw this Apoſtle down." The ſun, that glorious Sun of righteouſneſs, was now about to enter into his laſt eclipſe. Satan, who had left him for a ſeaſon, or, till the ſeaſon of his paſſion, is now to be permitted to bruiſe his heel again. This is his hour, and now the powers of darkneſs ſummon and exert their ſtrongeſt and united efforts. A hymn is a prelude to his dreadful paſſion. From the communion-table, the Saviour retires to the garden. An horrible dread, and inexpreſſible load of ſorrow begins to overwhelm and weigh down his innocent ſoul. His body can ſcarcely ſuſtain it. See how he faulters! See how his hands hang down, and his knees wax feeble under the amazing preſſure! He is afflicted and oppreſſed indeed. See, ſee, O my ſoul, how he ſweats! But what is that which I ſee? Blood—drops of blood—great drops of blood falling to the ground. Alas, was ever ſorrow like unto this ſorrow! Hark! what is that I hear? O dolorous complaint? "Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me." Hark! he ſpeaks again. Amazing! the Creator complains to the creature, "My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death: tarry you here and watch with me." And now he retires once more. But ſee how his agony increaſes—Hark! how he prays, and that too yet more earneſtly: "Father, if it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me." And will his heavenly Father leave him comfortleſs? No.—An angel (O happy, highly-favoured angel!) is ſent from heaven to ſtrengthen him. But where is *Peter* all this while? We are told that the holy JESUS took him, with *James* and *John*, into the garden. Surely he will not leave his LORD in ſuch deep diſtreſs! What is he doing? I bluſh to anſwer. Alas! he is ſleeping! may, though awakened once by his agonizing LORD, with a "*Simon Peter*, ſleepeſt thou? what! couldeſt thou not watch with me one hour?" yet his eyes, notwithſtanding

his

his profeſſion of conſtancy and care, are heavy with ſleep. LORD, what is man!

After hearing all this, we need not be ſurprized at the account given us, (ver. 58.) of another ſtep to his fall, viz. His following JESUS afar off. "But *Peter*, ſays the Evangeliſt, followed him afar off." The Redeemer's agony was now over, "and behold the hour is at hand, when he is to be betrayed into the hands of ſinners." He warns his ſleepy diſciples of it, and, acting like himſelf, goes out to meet the threatening ſtorm. "Ariſe, ſaid he let us go: behold! he that betrayeth me is at hand." *Judas*, one of the twelve that eat of his bread, performs the helliſh taſk, and lifts up his heel againſt him. He ſays, Hail, Maſter! kiſſes and then betrays him. For this was the ſign agreed on, "Whomſoever I ſhall kiſs, the ſame is he, hold him faſt." They knew the watch-word, and, like ſo many roaring lions, ſeize on their unreſiſting prey. This rouſes *Peter*. Out of an honeſt, but miſguided zeal, he draws his ſword, and cuts off the High-prieſt's ſervant's ear. The bleſſed JESUS heals the one, reproves the other; and, according to *Iſaiah*'s prophecy, is contentedly led as a lamb to the ſlaughter. *Peter*'s heat is ſoon cooled, and inſtead of adhering to his LORD, or ſaying, as might juſtly be expected, "Whither "thou goeſt, I will go; whitherſoever they lead thee, they "ſhall lead me alſo:" Alas! alas! he followed him afar off. Obſerve, he does not deny his LORD all at once. No. Satan leads us on by degrees into great ſins, and will not ſuffer us to be very bad immediately. *Peter* at firſt follows afar off: he ſkulks behind, and keeps on purpoſe at a diſtance, leſt he ſhould be accounted one of his followers. O *Peter*, *Peter*, did I not know how prone my own deceitful heart is to go aſtray from the great Shepherd and Biſhop of our ſouls, I ſhould now begin to ſay, Fie upon thee, fie upon thee. Hadſt thou kept cloſe to thy LORD, thou mighteſt have been

ſheltered

ſheltered ſafely under his almighty wings; but how canſt thou avoid falling, and that foully too, when thou beginneſt thus to be aſhamed of thy glorious maſter?

But this is not all. For we are not only informed that he followed JESUS afar off, but that "He went into the High Prieſt's palace (verſe 58.) and ſat with the ſervants." So that keeping bad company was another ſtep that led to his great fall. Oh *Peter!* my blood begins now almoſt to run cold within me. I tremble for thee more than ever. What canſt thou propoſe to thyſelf, or what bad thing may we not expect to hear of thee, when ſitting in ſuch ſorry company? I had much rather have heard that thou hadſt fled with thy other cowardly brethren. Thou ſitteſt among thy maſter's profeſſed enemies to ſee the end. Whatever becomes of him, I dread to hear what the end of all this gradual backſliding will be, in reſpect to thy own ſoul.

Well! the bleſſed JESUS is now at the bar. Omnipotence ſuffers itſelf to be arraigned, and he who ſet bounds to the ſea which it cannot paſs, is content to be bound, and that as a criminal, by the work of his own hands. Falſe witneſſes riſe up againſt him, and lay to his charge things that he knew not. "This fellow, ſay they, (verſe 61.) ſaid, I am able to deſtroy the temple of GOD, and to build it in three days." And what reply doth the innocent JESUS make? None at all. Not only becauſe they all knew that it was a malicious ſlander, but becauſe he ſtood as our repreſentative. He, therefore, held his peace, and as a ſheep before the ſhearers is dumb, ſo this immaculate Lamb of GOD opened not his mouth. At length, being adjured thereto by the High-prieſt in the name of the living GOD, he confeſſes himſelf to be the CHRIST, the ſon of the Bleſſed; and lets the imperious Sanhedrim know, that however contemptible his appearance might be now, yet they ſhould hereafter ſee him ſitting on the

the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. And does not this ſtrike terror into his accuſers and judges? By no means. The haughty High-Prieſt riſes in diſdain, hypocritically rends his cloaths, urging this as a reaſon, "He hath ſpoken blaſphemy; what further need have we of witneſſes?" Was ever indignity, like this indignity, put on thee, thou moſt adorable Mediator! Which ſhall I marvel at moſt, the High-Prieſt's impudence, or thy patience? Both, doubtleſs, are unparalleled. And yet, alas! a further trial awaits our ſuffering LORD. For whilſt the maſter is thus arraigned, inſulted, and cauſeleſly condemned at the bar within, *Satan* is no leſs buſy in wounding him through *Peter*'s ſide, who was ſitting in the palace without. *Peter*, indeed, thinks to ſit there undiſcovered; but a damſel comes to him, (verſe 69) ſaying, "Thou alſo waſt with JESUS of Galilee." And what then? Was that high treaſon? Or rather was it not the higheſt honour? *Peter*, what ſayeſt thou? Alas, (verſe 70) "He denied before them all, ſaying, I know not what thou ſayeſt." Know not what thou ſayeſt, *Peter?* her words were plain enough, "Thou alſo was with JESUS of Nazareth." Can any words be plainer? To deny this, in the leaſt, was bad, but to deny this before them all, who could ſo eaſily confront thee, proves thee to be falling indeed. Call him now no longer *Peter*, but call him *Ichabod:* for the glory of the LORD is departing from him.

However, as yet there is hope concerning him. For, conſcious, as it were, of his guilt (verſe 71) "He went out into the porch." *Satan* purſues him. For when a ſaint begins to fall, his helliſh language is, Down with him, down with him, even to the ground. Another damſel, therefore, is put in *Peter*'s way, who, upon ſeeing him, ſays, not unto *Peter* himſelf, but to them that were there, (verſe 71) "This fellow was alſo with JESUS of Nazareth." She ſpeaks the ſame language with her ſiſter ſcoffer, and with

thoſe who accuſed the bleſſed JESUS at the bar. Doubtleſs, our modern ſcoffers are related to them, for they uſe the ſame dialect every day when ſpeaking of CHRIST, or thoſe that, through grace, dare to own and confeſs him before men. But here would I ſtop and feign be excuſed from relating to this great aſſembly *Peter's* anſwer. Oh tell it not in *Gath*, publiſh it not in the ſtreets of *Aſkelon!* But we muſt not be wiſe above what is written. The Holy Spirit hath left it upon record, and proclaimed it by four Evangeliſts upon the houſe-top, and, therefore, I am conſtrained to tell you, that again (verſe 72.) "He denied with an oath, I do not know the man." What! an Apoſtle ſwear? Was it not enough barely to deny the damſel's aſſertion, but he muſt deny it with an oath? Perhaps, it was a crime he never was guilty of before. Surely, the way of ſin is down-hill. One ſtep leads to another. At firſt he only denied what was ſaid to him, by a kind of equivocation, "I know not what thou ſayeſt." Now he grows bolder, and denies with an oath, "I know not the man." What, *Peter!* Know not the man? That glorious God-man CHRIST JESUS thy LORD? What! not know Him, who called thee from the poor occupation of catching fiſh, to make thee an Apoſtle and a fiſher of men? What! not know Him, who bad thee come to him upon the waters, and Him who with his own almighty arm ſaved thee from drowning, when thou waſt anſwering thy name *Cephas*, and ſinking like a ſtone? What! not know Him, with whom thou haſt ſo intimately converſed for three years laſt paſt, who, ſo lately pronounced thee bleſſed, waſhed thy feet, gave thee a new name, and took thee to Mount *Tabor*, where he diſplayed before thee his excellent glory, which made thee cry out, It is good for us to be here? What! haſt thou forgot all this, *Peter?*

Surely, it is high time for the cock to crow. Hark! The cock does crow, not only once, but twice, but all in vain.

Fallen

Fallen as this great man is, he muſt ſtill fall lower. *Satan* is now about to give him the laſt and moſt fatal thruſt. He hath his quiver full of deadly arrows, and hath always inſtruments at hand, the weakeſt of which will foil the ſtrongeſt Apoſtle when left to himſelf. "After a while (verſe 73) came unto him they that ſtood by, and ſaid unto *Peter*, Surely, thou alſo waſt one of them, for thy ſpeech betrayeth thee." As though they had ſaid, "How canſt thou have the "impudence to ſay thou knoweſt not the man, when thy "very language and manner of ſpeaking betrays thy being "even one of his followers?" What ſays *Peter* now? Can he withſtand this glaring evidence? Yes, he not only denies it with a ſingle oath, but (Oh, how ſhall I ſpeak it!) he "began to curſe and to ſwear," and with a whole volly of execrable expreſſions, ſtriving to act the bravado, he perſiſts in ſaying (verſe 74) "I know not the man." And now, *Satan*, thou haſt gained thy point. A great man, through too much ſelf-confidence, ſpiritual pride, ſpiritual ſloth, and too great intimacy with ſome of thy children, is fallen indeed! Thou haſt ſifted him with a witneſs.

But is he fallen, never to riſe again? Is *Peter* ſunk too low for free grace ever to raiſe him up? Will the Redeemer ſuffer his truth to fail; or ſhall the prayer put up for him before he was led into temptation, viz. that his faith ſhould not fail, remain unanſwered? No, all the promiſes in CHRIST JESUS are all yea and all Amen; and having loved his own, he loves them unto the end. The enemy hath broke in upon *Peter* like a flood, but the almighty Redeemer will now lift up his ſtandard againſt him, and deliver his captive ſervant. Immediately, (verſe 74) upon this laſt denial of his LORD, "the cock crew." And what is moſt of all (nay, without which the cock might have crowed ten thouſand times) another Evangeliſt tells us, that "the LORD turned, and looked upon *Peter*." Oh amazing condeſcenſion!

deſcenſion! Oh unparalleled inſtance of endearing love! Our Lord was now upon a trial for his life. Fat bulls of *Baſhan* were ſurrounding him on every ſide. Yet the ſame love, that in the night in which he was betrayed, would not permit him to forget his diſciples in general, would not, though he was himſelf now arraigned at the bar, ſuffer him to forget his poor fallen Apoſtle in particular. "The LORD, therefore, turned, and looked upon *Peter*." But who beſides *Peter*, and ſouls like him recovering from their backſlidings, can tell the language of that look? Doubtleſs, it carried with it an "*Et tu Peter?* And art thou there *Peter?* "Is it not enough for me to be falſely accuſed, and con-"demned by my enemies, but I muſt be wounded alſo in "the houſe of my friends! Is it not ſufficient that *Judas* "betrays me, but thou muſt add to my grief by denying "me? Deny me too with an oath, nay, with oaths and "curſes deny that ever thou kneweſt me? Is this thy "kindneſs to thy friend? Alas! What is become of thy "boaſted profeſſions now? Art thou the man that didſt ſo "ſolemnly declare, that though thou ſhouldſt die with "me, thou wouldſt not deny me in any wiſe? Yes, Thou art "the man."

This, and much more of the ſame kind, we may well ſuppoſe was the real language of that convincing, heart-piercing look, which the LORD JESUS at this time gave his fallen *Peter*. Amazing! He looks him into contrition; whereas had he rewarded him according to his iniquity, he might have looked him into hell. Rejoice with me, therefore, my dear hearers. This ſtraying ſheep, through the tender mercies of the compaſſionate ſhepherd and biſhop of our ſouls, by this look is brought back to the fold again. "And *Peter*, ſays our text, remembered the words of JESUS, which ſaid unto him, Before the cock crow, ye ſhall deny me thrice." The time emphatically called the cock-crowing, which was about three

three in the morning, "thou ſhalt deny me thrice. And he went out." (The word ſeems to import, that he threw himſelf out with a holy violence) "and wept bitterly." St. *Mark* only ſays, "And when he thought thereon, he wept." For being an amanuenſis to St. *Peter*, though explicit in the account of his fall, he is very ſparing in mentioning his repentance. Unleſs we ſuppoſe that St. *Mark* would inſinuate that whenever *Peter* reflected on his fall, he always wept for ever after. However that be, he wept bitterly now. Methinks, I ſee him wringing his hands, rending his garments, ſtamping on the ground, and with the ſelf-condemned publican ſmiting upon his ungrateful breaſt. See how it heaves! Oh what piteous ſighs and groans are thoſe which come from the very bottom of his heart! Alas! It is too big to ſpeak. But his tears, his briny, bitter, repenting tears plainly beſpeak this to be the language of his awakened ſoul. "Alas! "Where have I been? On the devil's ground. With "whom have I been converſing? The devil's children. "What is this that I have done? Denied the LORD of "glory, with oaths and curſes denied that ever I knew him. "And now whither ſhall I go? Or where ſhall I hide my "guilty head? I have ſinned againſt light. I have ſinned "againſt repeated tokens of his dear diſtinguiſhing and hea-"venly love. I have ſinned againſt repeated warnings, re-"ſolutions, promiſes and vows. I have ſinned openly in "the face of the ſun, in the preſence of my maſter's ene-"mies, and thereby have cauſed his name to be blaſphemed. "How can I think of being ſuffered to behold the face of, "much leſs to be employed by, the ever-bleſſed JESUS any "more? O *Peter*, thou haſt undone thyſelf. Juſtly mayſt "thou be thrown aſide like a broken veſſel. GOD be mer-"ciful to me a ſinner."

And is this the language of thy tears, O *Peter*? Bleſſed art thou ſtill then, thou *Simon Bar-Jonah*. Theſe tears, and this holy

holy reſentment againſt thyſelf, beſpeak thee to be a holy mourner. Yet a little while, and thou ſhalt be comforted with a "Go tell his brethren and *Peter*, that he is riſen;" and with a "*Simon* ſon of *Jonah*, loveſt thou me? Then feed my lambs." And where is now thy boaſting, O *Satan*? Or what haſt thou gained by foiling this favourite of heaven? Thou didſt deſire to have him. Thy requeſt was granted. Thou haſt ſifted him as wheat. But doſt thou imagine the all-prevailing Mediator will ſuffer thee to pluck him out of his hands? No. JESUS hath prayed for him, and therefore *Peter*'s faith ſhall not finally fail. Rejoice not then over him, O thou enemy of ſouls! For though he has fallen, yet ſee how he begins to riſe again. Though at the preſent he ſits in darkneſs, yet, ere long, the glory of the LORD ſhall ſhine around him.

Where then are thoſe Sons of *Belial*, thoſe perverſe diſputers of this world, and yet, if poſſible, more perverſe perverters of the Word of GOD? Dare any of you now go away, ſaying within yourſelves, "Who can blame us for a "little equivocating, or a little innocent lying, curſing, "and ſwearing? Was not *Peter*, the great Apoſtle *Peter*, "guilty of all theſe?" Yes he was, but with this difference, he fell through ſurprize, and but once, you, perhaps, ſin wilfully and habitually. Fall he did, and that dreadfully too; but if his fall was dreadful, his repentence was as ſincere and laſting. Ere long you ſhall ſee this ſame *Peter*, boldly owning his LORD before the whole *Jewiſh* Sanhedrim, and rejoicing that he was counted worthy to ſuffer for his great name's ſake. Ere long you ſhall hear of an angel's being ſent to bring him out of priſon, and at laſt ſealing his bleſſed doctrine with his blood. Go ye then, and entreat the LORD to look you into a godly ſorrow, and ſee that with *Peter* you bring forth fruits meet for repentance; or as the LORD GOD liveth, in whoſe name I ſpeak, and in whoſe preſence we

we now ſtand; you, with all your carnal reaſonings and wilful wreſtings of the word of GOD, ſhall, ere long, be thruſt down to the nethermoſt hell.

But why ſhould I waſte my time in reaſoning with men of ſuch perverſe minds? To you who do, from your hearts, believe on JESUS of *Nazareth*, and who, in reality, are the children of the moſt High GOD, the mournful paſſage we are now upon, does, in a more immediate manner, call me to addreſs myſelf. You, I am perſuaded, on hearing of *Peter*'s fall, and the LORD's turning and looking upon him, will not draw this abominable inference, "Let us ſin then, that grace may abound." No. I know you deteſt it from your inmoſt ſouls; and if it was proper to ſpeak, would to a man cry out, "God forbid." Your hearts, I would humbly hope, are rather employed in ſilent ejaculation to the holy JESUS, ſaying within yourſelves, "Oh, that he "would this day look down from heaven, the habitation of "his holineſs, and cauſe, out of theſe rocky hearts, floods of "repenting tears to flow." I will readily join with you in this neceſſary requeſt. For, alas! we are all guilty concerning this thing, viz. Of denying our LORD, as well as *Peter*. Some of us, perhaps, have not ſo openly with oaths and curſes denied that ever we knew him. But then, though we have in words owned, yet in works and practice, it may be, we have habitually denied him. For how often have we been ſleeping, when we ought to have been watching? And how often have we been warming and indulging our bodies, when we ſhould have been in our cloſets warming our hearts in prayer? How often have we needleſsly left the communion of ſaints, and as needleſsly put ourſelves into the ways of, and too intimately converſed with open and unconverted ſinners, or at leaſt, with thoſe who we had reaſon to think were enemies to the croſs of CHRIST? How often have we been drowſy when hearing the word of GOD? Nay, how

often have we been ſtupid, and even as dead as ſtones, at the table of the LORD, when CHISRT has been evidently ſet forth crucified before us? How often have we been ſo fooliſh as to truſt our hearts, and inſtead of truſting the LORD, have leaned on the broken reed of our own underſtandings? How often have we been puffed up with ſpiritual pride, and confidently boaſted of our graces, as though we had not received them? And oh, how often have we ſhamefully followed our LORD afar off? And notwithſtanding he may have manifeſted himſelf to us as he doth not to the world; notwithſtanding he may have taken us on the mount of ordinances, given us to ſee his glory, led us into his banqueting-houſe, and let his banner over us be love; notwithſtanding our repeated vows that we would never leave him, never forſake him; yet how often have we, as it were, been aſhamed of him, and his glorious Goſpel, and given our LORD occaſion, times without number, to complain in that cutting language, "Theſe wounds have I received in the "houſe of my friends?" And now which of us ſhall throw the firſt ſtone at *Peter?* Behold, he has been placed in the midſt of us this day. My brethren, why ſtand we like ſtatues? I ſay, let him that is without this ſin of denying the LORD JESUS, caſt the firſt ſtone. But with what face of juſtice can we do this, being guilty in many reſpects equally, and in ſome even more guilty than *Peter* himſelf? Rather let us turn the edge of our reſentment againſt ourſelves, and imitating *Peter* in his repentance, as we have undoubtedly too much imitated him in his crime, let us go out from a wicked, noiſy, and deluding world, and weep bitterly. Who knows but the LORD may return and leave a bleſſing behind him? For this end was this inſtance of human frailty and divine condeſcenſion recorded. In him the Redeemer ſhewed all this long-ſuffering, that we, notwithſtanding our manifold backſlidings, might be kept from deſpair. True, we have ſinned, but though we have ſinned

againſt

againſt light and love, yet we have ſtill an advocate with the Father, even JESUS CHRIST the righteous, whoſe precious blood can, and, if applied to our ſouls by a living faith, will certainly cleanſe us both from the guilt and power of all our ſins. It was this which waſhed away the ſtain of this foul and dreadful fall from *Peter*'s heart. He quickly roſe, and was as ſpeedily reſtored to his bleſſed maſter's favour again. "Go tell his brethren and *Peter*," ſaid the angel, "that he goeth before you into *Galilee*. There ſhall you ſee him. They did ſee him. And what ſaid JESUS unto him? He renewed his commiſſion, and bid him "feed his ſheep and lambs." Accordingly we hear not only of his preaching, but of his being honoured ſo to preach, that three thouſand were converted in one day. And is not the LORD JESUS the ſame now as he was yeſterday? Yes, he is, and will continue the ſame for ever. We have his own royal word for it, that he will heal our backſlidings, and love us freely. Let us return then unto the LORD, from whom we have revolted. He is long-ſuffering, ſlow to anger, and ſoon repenteth him of the evil which we provoke him to ſend upon us. But oh let us not return again to folly, but carefully watch and pray againſt ſpiritual pride, ſpiritual ſloth, and ſelf-indulgence, from whence all our evils flow.

Young preachers, to you in an eſpecial manner are theſe words of exhortation ſent. Of all people in the world, you had need watch moſt againſt ſpiritual pride. It is a fly that often ſpoils your whole pot of ointment. This made aged *Paul* ſo careful to warn *Timothy* not to lay hands upon novices, leſt, ſays he, "being puffed up with pride, they fall into the condemnation of the devil." How many awful inſtances have we had of this in various places within theſe few years laſt paſt? Young men, therefore, I exhort you, to be humble. For CHRIST's ſake, for your own ſouls ſake, for the ſake of the church of GOD which he hath purchaſed with

his own blood, pray without ceaſing that you may be cloathed with humility. Take care of carrying too high ſail. Popularity is a dangerous ſea, and nothing but the ſpecial and almighty grace of GOD can keep you from overſetting in it. Mark the rocks againſt which others have made ſhipwreck, and beg of the LORD JESUS night and day, to help you to ſteer ſuch a courſe as to avoid and keep clear of them: he alone can preſerve you. *Satan* envies the honour put upon you; he has a particular enmity againſt thoſe whom he ſees the Redeemer making uſe of. He knows your weak ſides, and will deſire to have you, as he deſired to have *Peter*, that he may ſift you as wheat. Watch, therefore, and pray always, that you may not fall in an hour of temptation. If *Peter* could not ſtand when left to himſelf, what are we?

Have any from among ourſelves of late given proofs of this? Nay, have any that once appeared boldly for our LORD, and ſeemed ready to follow him to priſon or to death, have any ſuch, I ſay, been permitted not only to follow him afar off, but ſhamefully and openly to diſown and deny both him and his people? Let us not marvel as though ſome ſtrange thing happened unto us, but let us ſearch the ſcriptures. Many ſuch inſtances are recorded there; and we know who hath forewarned us to expect them now. "It muſt needs be, ſays the unerring, all-ſeeing JESUS, that offences come. Let us not therefore be high-minded, but fear; and let him that ſtandeth take heed leſt he fall." Brethren, pray for them. Who knows but they may yet riſe, and the locks at preſent cut off, grow again? Who knows but the cock may yet crow, JESUS may yet look, and ſuch grievous backſliders, being as it were reconverted, may appear more zealous than ever in ſtrengthening their brethren? When ſhall this once be? "We wait for thy ſalvation, O LORD: make no long tarrying, O our GOD!

In

In the mean while, let none of us be diſcouraged, GOD will take care of his own cauſe. The Redeemer hath declared, that the gates of hell ſhall never be able to prevail againſt his church: and, therefore, though the ark may totter, he can keep it from falling; and though driven for a while into the *Philiſtine*'s country, he aſſuredly can bring it back. He that healed the wound imprudently given by *Peter* to the ear of the High Prieſt's ſervant, he can and will heal all wounds, and repair all breaches that have been occaſioned either by the backſlidings, or unguarded conduct of thoſe whom he vouchſafes to employ. "Out of the eater ſhall come forth meat, and out of the ſtrong ſhall come forth ſweetneſs." The wicked, no doubt, rejoiced when they heard of *Peter*'s fall, and in all probability frequently vented their ſpleen in ſaying, "Here is religion for you! Here is a "pretty family of reformers, and ſetters forth of new doc-"trines. One of them hath betrayed his maſter with a kiſs, "and another with oaths and curſes denied that ever he "knew him: if this be the beginning, what will the end of "their boaſted reformation be?" What will the end of it be? Ye fools! I have an anſwer ready: CHRIST ſhall be glorified, *Satan* and all his emiſſaries confounded, and a multitude of ſouls out of every nation, language, and tongue, redeemed and finally ſaved. Oh what a CHRIST have we! Courage then, my brethren, courage! I beat to arms again in the name of the LORD of hoſts. Let us not quit the field of battle, but in the ſtrength of our once crucified, but now exalted JESUS, renew the combat. "He is faithful who hath promiſed not only to make us conquerors, but more than conquerors through his love." Yet a little while, and our warfare ſhall be accompliſhed, death will put an end to all. A wicked world, a wicked heart, a wicked devil ſhall then ceaſe from troubling us, and our weary ſouls ſhall never be ſo much as tempted to deny our bleſſed LORD any more.

Where is *Peter* now? Yonder he ſits, not weeping bitterly, but rejoicing in GOD his Saviour, on a throne of never-fading glory. To Him, at whoſe right hand he is now ſitting, and who alone is able to keep us from falling, and to preſent us faultleſs before the preſence of his glory with exceeding joy; to Him the only wiſe GOD our Saviour, be glory, majeſty, dominion, and power, both now and ever. *Amen.*

SERMON

SERMON LIX.

The true Way of beholding the LAMB of GOD.

JOHN i. 35, 36.

Again, the next Day after, John ſtood, and two of his Diſciples; and looking upon Jeſus as he walked, he ſaith, Behold the LAMB *of* GOD.

GLORIOUS words theſe! Before we ſet about the opening and enforcing them, permit me to introduce myſelf in the language of *Paul* to King *Agrippa*, "Would to "GOD that both my own heart, and likewiſe the hearts of "all that hear me this day, may not only be almoſt, but "altogether in ſuch a divine frame, as I am perſuaded the "heart of that man of GOD was who firſt uttered theſe "words!" I need not tell you his name; our text tells us, it was *John*; emphatically called *John* the Baptiſt, becauſe he was ſent to baptize with water unto repentance, in order to prepare his hearers for the further baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt. He was a *Boanerges*, a ſon of thunder. He came in the ſpirit and power of *Elias*, and thereby ſoon rendered himſelf ſo exceedingly popular, that not only *Jeruſalem*, all *Judea*, and all the regions round about *Jordan*, flocked to

hear him preach, but even ſome of the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim* began to doubt, whether he was not the *Meſſiah* himſelf. Accordingly we are told in this chapter, "That they ſent prieſts and levites from *Jeruſalem* to aſk him, Who art thou? What ſayeſt thou of thyſelf?" A moſt commodious opportunity this, had he any thing in view but his maſter's glory and the good of ſouls, for *John* to have ſet up for himſelf. He might have ſaid, "*Si populus vult decipi, decipiatur*; if "people will be deceived, let them; I will impoſe on their "credulity, and let them look upon me as the *Meſſiah*:" But ſcorning any ſuch ſiniſter and baſe ends, "He confeſſed, and denied not, but confeſſed, I am not the CHRIST." The Evangeliſt expreſſes himſelf in a very peculiar manner, "He confeſſed, and denied not, but confeſſed;" implying that he took more than ordinary pains to rectify their miſtake, and guard them againſt thinking more highly of him than they ought to think: nay, impatient, as it were, of the leaſt appearance of any ſuch thing, he ſpeaks of himſelf in the moſt diminutive terms, acknowledges that he was unworthy even of carrying his bleſſed maſter's ſhoes, and ſeizes the very firſt opportunity that offered itſelf to point him out in perſon to the people. The next day (ver. 29.) *John* ſeeth JESUS coming unto him, and upon ſeeing him, immediately cries out, "Behold the Lamb of GOD:" "Gaze not on, nor "let your views terminate in me, but look to and behold "the Lamb of GOD which taketh away the ſin of the world." Thus *John* ſpoke in public; and to prove that he acted the ſame conſiſtent part in private, our text informs us, that, "Again, the next day after, *John* ſtood, and two of his diſciples," who like other newly awakened ſouls, having their maſter's perſon too much in admiration, he labours to divert their views alſo from himſelf to CHRIST, and that too in the very ſame language. "For looking upon JESUS as he walked, he ſaith, Behold the LAMB of GOD."

Thus

Thus does this diſintereſted, honeſt-hearted baptiſt, unwearyedly and repeatedly recommend the LORD JESUS, under the ſame endearing character of the LAMB of GOD.

It ſhall be our buſineſs in the following diſcourſe,

Firſt, To ſhew you why it is that JESUS CHRIST is ſtiled the LAMB of GOD. And,

Secondly, What we are to underſtand by beholding him. Way will then be made for a word of application.

And firſt, Why is JESUS ſtiled the LAMB of GOD?

I preſume one reaſon that may be aſſigned for it may be drawn from the account we have given us of his moſt amazing and unparalleled meekneſs. A Lamb, you all know, is one of the moſt pacific creatures in the world. When we would deſcribe, or point out a perſon of a peaceable diſpoſition, we ſay ſuch a one is as quiet as a Lamb. But what is the meekneſs of any perſon, even *Moſes* himſelf, nay, of all the ſaints that ever lived, put them all together, in compariſon of the meekneſs of the bleſſed JESUS? To prove this, I might refer you to his whole life, which was one continued meek and patient enduring of contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf; but if you want me to ſpecify particular inſtances, only take a walk with me to *Gethſemane*'s garden; there you will ſee the traitor *Judas* at the head of a troop of ruffians, accoſting his glorious LORD with a Hail maſter! then kiſſing him, and then betraying him. But what ſays the Prince of peace? Only, "Friend, wherefore art thou come? *Judas*, betrayeſt thou the ſon of man with a kiſs?" But how does this ſame JESUS behave after he was apprehended? Even in the ſame meek manner: for when his warm-hearted diſciple *Peter*, through

through a miſguided zeal, had cut off the High Prieſt's ſervant's ear, Suffer ye, ſaid the holy JESUS, thus far. In all probability theſe words were addreſſed by our LORD to the officers who had tied his hands behind him. As though he had ſaid, "Be pleaſed to unlooſe me, whilſt I cure that poor man's "ear, which my too forward diſciple hath imprudently cut "off, and then you ſhall bind me again." Was ever reply, was there ever meekneſs like unto this thy meekneſs, O thou bleſſed LAMB of GOD! Well did *Iſaiah* prophecy concerning thee, "That thou ſhouldſt be led as a lamb to the ſlaughter," which goes as willingly to the ſhambles, as to the paſture: and as juſtly might thy forerunner call upon ſinners to behold thee under the pacific character of the LAMB of GOD. Help us, holy JESUS, to come at thy invitation, and to learn of thee, who gaveſt ſuch amazing evidences of thy being meek and lowly in heart! then, and not 'till then, ſhall we find true reſt in our ſouls.

But further, the dear LORD JESUS may properly be called a LAMB, or The LAMB, by way of emphaſis, not only in alluſion to the Lamb that was offered under the law morning and evening, but more eſpecially becauſe he was typified by the paſchal lamb. Hence he is ſtiled, by that prince of preachers St. *Paul*, CHRIST our paſſover; and in alluſion to the ſame, the Apoſtle *Peter* tells us, "That we are not redeemed with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, from our vain converſation, but with the precious blood of JESUS CHRIST, as of a Lamb without blemiſh and without ſpot." This was an indiſpenſable requiſite to be found in the paſchal lamb. It was to be a lamb without blemiſh. A proper type of him who knew no ſin, but was ſpotleſly holy, harmleſs, and altogether undefiled in heart, lip, and life. Indeed, if we conſider him as having the chaſtiſement of our peace, and the iniquities of us all laid upon him by way of imputation, he was, as ſome divines expreſs it, the greateſt

ſinner

ſinner that ever was: and we ſhould eſteem him to be ſuch in reality, were we to judge of his innocence by the abuſive and barbarous treatment that he met with whilſt tabernacling on earth. But, notwithſtanding all this, he was without ſin, and therefore could boldly and truly give men and devils the challenge, and ſay, "Which of you convinceth me of ſin? The prince of this world cometh, but ſhall find nothing in me. There was no corruption in the heart of this immaculate LAMB of GOD for *Satan*'s temptations to lay hold on: But this properly belongeth only to him: for any of his followers, though arrived at the higheſt pitch of chriſtian perfection, much leſs for young converts, mere novices in the things of GOD, to preſume that they either have, or ever ſhall, while on this ſide eternity, arrive at ſuch a ſinleſs ſtate, argues ſuch an ignorance of the ſpiritual extent of the moral law, of the true interpretation of GOD's word, of the univerſal experience of GOD's people in all ages, as well as of the remaining unmortified corruptions of their own deſperately wicked and deceitful hearts, that I dare venture to tell the preachers and abettors of any ſuch doctrine, however knowing they may be in other reſpects, that they know not the true nature of goſpel-holineſs, nor the COMPLEATNESS OF A BELIEVER'S STANDING IN THE UNSPOTTED IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF JESUS CHRIST, as they ought to know, or as I truſt they themſelves, through divine grace, will be made to know before they die. Surely it is high time to awake out of this deluſive dream! Pardon this ſhort, (would to GOD there was no occaſion of adding) though too neceſſary a digreſſion.

But to proceed. The paſchal lamb was further typical of CHRIST, its great antitype, in that it was to be killed in the evening, and afterwards roaſted with fire. So CHRIST, our paſſover, was ſacrificed for us in the evening of the world; only with this material difference, the paſchal lamb was firſt

ſlain,

ſlain, and then roaſted; whereas the holy JESUS, the ſpotleſs LAMB of GOD, was burnt and roaſted in the fire of his Father's wrath before he actually expired upon the croſs. To ſatisfy you of this, if you can bear to be ſpectators of ſuch an awful tragedy, as I deſired you juſt now to go with me to the entrance, ſo I muſt now entreat you to venture a little further into the ſame garden. But—ſtop—What is that we ſee? Behold the LAMB of GOD, undergoing the moſt direful tortures of vindictive wrath! Of the people, even of his diſciples, there is none with him. Alas! was ever ſorrow like unto that ſorrow, wherewith his innocent ſoul was afflicted in this day of his Father's fierce anger? Before he entered into this bitter paſſion, out of the fulneſs of his heart, he ſaid, "Now is my ſoul troubled." But how is it troubled now! his agony beſpeaks it to be exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death. It extorts ſweat, yea, a bloody ſweat. His face, his hands, his garments, are all over ſtained with blood. It extorts ſtrong cryings and many tears. See how the incarnate deity lies proſtrate before his Father, who now laid on him the iniquities of us all. See how he agonizes in prayer! Hark! Again and again he addreſſes his Father with an "If it be poſſible, let this cup paſs from me!" Tell me, ye bleſſed angels, tell me, *Gabriel* (or whatſoever thou art called, who waſt ſent from heaven in this important hour, to ſtrengthen our agonizing LORD) tell me, if ye can, what CHRIST endured in this dark and doleful night; and tell me, tell me what you yourſelves felt when you heard this ſame God-man, whilſt expiring on the accurſed tree, breaking forth into that dolorous, unheard-of expoſtulation, "My GOD, my GOD, why, or how haſt thou forſaken me? Were you not all ſtruck dumb? And did not an univerſal awful ſilence fill heaven itſelf, when GOD the Father ſaid unto his ſword, "Sword, ſmite thy fellow!" Well might nature put on its ſable weeds: well might the rocks rend, to ſhew their ſympathy with a ſuffering Saviour; and well might the ſun withdraw

withdraw its light, as though it was ſhocked and confounded to ſee its maker ſuffer. But our hearts are harder than rocks, or otherwiſe they would now break, and our ſouls more ſtupid than any part of the inanimate creation, or they would even now, in ſome degree, at leaſt, ſympathize with a crucified Redeemer; who for us men, and for our ſalvation, was thus roaſted, as it were, in the fire of his Father's wrath, and therefore fitly ſtiled the LAMB of GOD.

But further. The paſchal lamb was typical of CHRIST our paſſover in another reſpect. For as the blood of the lamb, after it was ſlain, was ſprinkled upon the door-poſts of the *Iſraelites* houſes, ſo the blood of JESUS CHRIST, ſhed for the ſins of the world, is to be applied to, and by faith ſprinkled upon the hearts of the true *Iſrael* of GOD. And as the deſtroying angel had no power to execute vengeance on, or hurt thoſe whoſe door-poſts were thus ſprinkled with the blood of the paſchal lamb, ſo in the great and terrible day of the LORD, he ſhall be prohibited both from deſtroying or hurting true believers, who by a living faith in the blood of JESUS, have their hearts ſprinkled from an evil conſcience. Hence the blood of CHRIST is called "The blood of ſprinkling." And laſtly, As the lamb under the law was feaſted upon by GOD's people, after it was ſlain, ſo believers under the goſpel by faith feaſt upon a crucified Redeemer. CHRIST, our paſſover, ſays the apoſtle, is ſacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feaſt, not barely upon an Eaſter-day, but all the year round. For the juſt, i. e. truly juſtified ſouls, live by faith, and find, by happy experience, that in a ſpiritual ſenſe CHRIST's fleſh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; and therefore believing on him is ſtiled "Eating the fleſh and drinking the blood of the ſon of man." Agreeable to this, in our communion office, the miniſter, when he gives the bread to the communicants, is directed to make uſe of theſe affecting words, "Take and eat this in

" remembrance that CHRIST died for thee, and feed on " him in thy heart by faith with thankſgiving." May all who give, and all that receive that bread, feel the meaning of this form of ſound words experimentally, and powerfully preſſed home upon their ſouls! Then indeed, but not till then, may they expect to take this holy ſacrament to their comfort. Upon all theſe accounts then, well might the Baptiſt recommend the holy JESUS under the ſignificant character of the Lamb. And with equal propriety might he be called the LAMB of GOD, not only becauſe he was a Lamb of GOD the Father's providing, but becauſe he was co-equal, co-eſſential with the Father: " The Word that was with GOD, the Word that was GOD, even GOD over all, GOD bleſſed for evermore. For ever adored be the triune GOD for this great myſtery of godlineſs, GOD manifeſt in the fleſh! O may it be continually marvellous in our eyes! O make us, thou altogether lovely Redeemer, like-minded with thy bleſſed angels, that with them we may always ſo eagerly, and ſo perſeveringly deſire to look into it, that neither the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, or pride of life, may ever in the leaſt divert us from beholding thee!

What this beholding him imports, comes next to be conſidered, under our ſecond general head.

And here I take it for granted, that it cannot imply a beholding the LORD JESUS in perſon with our bodily eyes. It is true, indeed, when *John* called upon the people and his diſciples to behold the LAMB of GOD, they were thus highly favoured: and we are apt to ſay within ourſelves, Bleſſed are the eyes which ſaw what they ſaw; and ſo undoubtedly they were. But had their views terminated only in beholding his perſon, or knowing him barely according to the fleſh, they might notwithſtanding have died in their ſins, and been condemned to depart from him into everlaſting fire, prepared for the

the devil and his angels.—Our LORD himſelf hath told us, that there will be many who will plead that they eat and drank in his preſence, and heard him preach in their ſtreets, to whom he will ſay, "Verily I know you not." A true beholding of the LAMB of GOD, muſt therefore neceſſarily import ſomething more; and what can that be but a beholding him with an eye of faith? This is what the Old Teſtament ſaints were invited to, when the glorious Redeemer called upon them in thoſe emphatic terms, "Behold me, behold me;" and again, "Look unto me, all the ends of the earth." This our LORD in another place terms, believing on him: "Bleſſed are they which have not ſeen me, and yet have believed:" not barely as the reſult of a mere rational conviction, which is no more than an hiſtorical faith, but as the conſequence of a true ſpiritual conviction of our being every way undone, and liable to eternal condemnation without him. This is believing on him with the heart, and is ſometimes expreſſed by coming to, receiving, and truſting in him: different expreſſions, but all importing one and the ſelf ſame thing. "I wound, and I heal." That is the method the Holy Ghoſt takes, and that is the pattern goſpel miniſters muſt follow in preaching him. From any other, though preſcribed to us by an angel from heaven, good LORD, deliver us!

But ſecondly. By beholding the LAMB of GOD, we are to underſtand not only looking to him ſo as to truſt him for the pardon of our ſins, but beholding him ſo as to have our hearts broke with a true and godly ſorrow for having crucified and ſlain him by them. For thus ſpeaks the LORD by the mouth of the Prophet *Zechariah*, "They ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him, as one that mourneth for an only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born." This prediction was in ſome degree fulfilled immediately after

the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, in the days of Pentecoſt, when ſo many being pricked to the heart, were made to look to, believe on, and lament over a pierced JESUS. But it will be continually fulfilling in the experience of every true beholder of the LAMB of GOD, till time ſhall be no more. True faith, at the ſame time as it opens the heart to receive CHRIST, melts and diſſolves it into tears of godly ſorrow, for having betrayed and crucified him. Such were the tears of *Mary*, when ſhe waſhed the feet of her ſin-forgiving LORD: They flowed from a ſenſe of pardoning love. She loved much, having much forgiven her. And though ſhe knew the LORD had forgiven her, yet ſhe could not forgive herſelf. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.* Hence thoſe repenting tears: they proceeded from love: ſorrow, flowing from any other principle, is not a godly, but a legal ſorrow, which the moſt abandoned wretch may have without the leaſt degree of ſaving grace. Thus we hear of a *Judas* his repenting, and of an *Eſau* crying out with an exceeding bitter cry; but the one all the while was a prophane perſon, and the other immediately went and hanged himſelf. And why? Their ſorrow was only extorted by a fear of hell, and a deſpairing ſenſe of impending ruin. It is true, a godly ſorrow may, and I believe generally does, begin with ſomething of this nature; but then it does not end there. Through want of a due conſideration of this, it is to be feared, many ſeeming converts have taken up with a few legal convictions, which never ended in ſavingly and truly beholding the LAMB of GOD. May none here preſent, by a half-way repentance, and hypocritical ſorrow for ſin, add to the unhappy numbers!

But this is not all. A ſcriptural beholding of the LAMB of GOD, denotes not only ſuch a relying on CHRIST for pardon of ſin, as is attended with a truly godly ſorrow for it, but ſuch a believing on him, as is productive of a holy life, and a univerſal chearful obſervance of all his divine commands.

When

When the two disciples mentioned in our text, heard *John* speak, we are told that they followed him, viz. the LORD JESUS CHRIST. And if GOD hath given us an hearing ear, when called upon to behold the LAMB of GOD, we shall certainly have an obedient heart, and follow him in the way of holy obedience. But then it will be an obedience flowing from love: A working not for, but from life. Not out of a servile fear of being damned, but from a grateful sense of having received the beginning of salvation in our hearts. And this is what the Apostle calls "faith working by love." Many, I know, censure and look upon us as troublers of *Israel*, for preaching up the doctrine of justification by faith alone in the imputed righteousness of JESUS CHRIST. We own the charge. We do preach, and hope shall continue to preach it, till we can preach no more. *Luther* stiles it, *Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*; the article by which the church must stand or fall: and in the ninth article of our own church, it is termed, a most wholesome doctrine. Take away this, and you take away the only solid foundation upon which a truly weary and heavy-laden sinner can possibly build his hopes of pardon and acceptance in the sight of a holy and sin-avenging GOD. But why this outcry against the doctrine of justification by faith alone? They say this doctrine destroys good works. But do we, by preaching this doctrine, make void the law of GOD? No: We thereby establish the law. For, though faith alone justifies, yet, as the good old Puritans used to observe, That faith which is alone, justifieth not. Agreeable to this, speaketh the 12th article of our Church. "Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and "follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and "endure the severity of GOD's judgment, yet are they pleas-"ing and acceptable to GOD in CHRIST, and do spring "out necessarily of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by "them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is "dis-

" diſcerned by the fruit." They, therefore, who object againſt our inſiſting upon juſtification by faith alone, as deſtructive of morality, not only betray great ignorance of the articles of our Church, and of GOD's word, but give too great reaſon to ſuſpect, that they never experienced the bleſſed influence of a true and lively faith in their own hearts. For true and undefiled religion, is nothing more or leſs, than a univerſal morality, founded upon the love of GOD and faith in CHRIST JESUS. And a true beholding him as pierced for our ſins, will, in its own nature, ſweetly compel us to cry out, " What ſhall we render unto the LORD?" It was this, that, perhaps, in a quarter of an hour, made that covetous worldling *Zaccheus*, give half of his goods to the poor; it was this, that all of a ſudden made the Jailor waſh the ſtripes of thoſe whom he had but a little before thruſt into an inward priſon; it was this that cauſed *Lydia*, whoſe heart the LORD had opened, ſo freely to open her houſe to entertain the Apoſtles; and it was this that excited the Apoſtles themſelves in general, and St. *Paul* in particular, to bid adieu to worldly honours, to glory in nothing but the croſs of CHRIST, and to fly like an arch-angel from pole to pole, publiſhing the bleſſed and everlaſting goſpel. " The love of CHRIST, ſaid he, conſtraineth us." Preaching faith in this manner, ſeems to me the only ſcriptural way of preaching CHRIST: and by this means we ſhall ſteer a middle courſe between two dangerous extremes. For to inſiſt only upon morality and good works, and not lay a true lively faith, as a foundation whereon they are to be built, (as it is to be feared too many do) is to act like *Pharaoh*'s taſk-maſters, and bid people make brick without ſhewing them were to get ſtraw. " My ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret!" On the other hand, to call upon people to believe in, and behold the LAMB of GOD, and at the ſame time not exhort them to maintain good works, as an evidence and fruit of their beholding him, is the way to

turn the grace of GOD into lasciviousness. And therefore, however evangelical such preachers may seem in their own eyes, yet if the writings of *Moses* and the Prophets, of our LORD and his Apostles, are to be our judges, they do not rightly divide the word of truth. "To their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united!"

Once more. A true beholding of the LAMB of GOD, implies such a beholding him, as will transform us into his divine likeness. This will be the effect of our seeing him as he is in heaven; and this, in its degree, will always be the consequence of our beholding him with an eye of a true and lively faith on earth. When *Moses* came down from mount *Horeb*, where he had been conversing with GOD, we are told, that his face shone; and if we have been upon the mount of ordinances beholding by faith the blessed LAMB of GOD, though our faces will not shine, yet our hearts will be moulded into his blessed image. This is what the Apostle *Paul* terms, in one place, "Being transformed by the renewing of our minds;" and in another, "Passing from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the LORD." All manifestations, of whatever kind or degree, if not attended with this transforming and truly sanctifying influence, are unprofitable, delusive, or merely imaginary. *Balaam* could call himself the man whose eyes were open, and the man who had seen the visions of the Almighty, and yet he was a poor worldling all the while. He loved the wages of unrighteousness, though forced by GOD not to receive them. Hence we may easily and rationally account for the falling away of some, and it may be the final apostacy of many others, who in the late religious stir, (as some are pleased to call it) seemed to be uncommonly gifted, and to be lifted up, as it were, to the third heaven, Satan being sensible that the Holy Spirit of GOD was working a great work upon the earth, turns himself into an angel of light, introduces his extraordinaries, and thereby

mimics GOD's true work now, as the magicians were once permitted to mimic the real miracles of *Moſes* formerly. Such counterfeits, thoſe who are not ignorant of Satan's devices, ought from time to time to add all diligence to ſearch out and detect; but after the utmoſt caution imaginable, I believe we ſhall find the ſaying of a very zealous Reformer (who thought, at his firſt coming out, that he ſhould convert the whole world) to be too true, viz. "That old Satan will be, in many "caſes, too hard for young *Melanchthon*." Satan is an old practitioner, and we, comparatively ſpeaking, but novices; and therefore no wonder, that we ſometimes miſtake his extraordinaries, for the powerful operations of the Holy Spirit; or look upon thoſe, at leaſt for a while, who are only ſtony-ground hearers, and have received the word with joy, as though they were truly converted to, and had by a living, ſoul-transforming faith, beheld the LAMB of GOD. Such miſtakes may ſerve to make us more cautious. But to condemn a work in the lump, as merely deluſive and diabolical, or roundly to affirm, that all the pretended ſubjects of it have taken up only with an ideal CHRIST, becauſe ſome have miſtaken imaginations for the true ſpiritual manifeſtation of GOD's love to their hearts, diſcovers ſuch an ignorance of ſcripture, of Satan's devices, and the accounts given us of paſt revivals in all ages, that if one did not know the dreadful blindneſs of a bigotted ſectarian zeal, and what a proneneſs there is in the beſt of men, to condemn every thing that doth not come juſt in their own way, we ſhould think it morally impoſſible that good men ſhould run ſuch lengths as ſome have done of late, in cenſuring what I think may be called, amidſt all the infirmities and weakneſſes that have attended it, A great and glorious work of a GOD.

But it is time for me to draw nearer to a concluſion. We have now then, my dear hearers, done with the doctrinal part of our text; in opening of which, that we might deal

with you as rational creatures, we have endeavoured calmly, and in the fear of GOD, to address ourselves to your understandings: but the hardest work is yet behind, namely, to affect and warm your hearts. This I take to be the very life of preaching: for man is a compound creature, made up of affections, as well as understanding; and, consequently, without addressing both, we only do our work by halves. It is true, every one hath his proper gift, and some excel in making use of a proper method to inform the judgment, whilst others are more eminent for exciting the passions. Both are beautiful in their season; and both ought and will be used by all who have warm hearts, as well as clear heads. *Moses* and the Prophets, CHRIST and his Apostles, dealt much in exhortations, as well as in opening and explaining the weighty matters of the law. And if we are taught by the same Spirit, we shall, like them, bring light and heat with us, when called to speak of, and enforce the things which concern the kingdom of GOD. Without a proper mixture of these, however a preacher may acquire the character, in the letter-learned and polite world, of being a calm and cool reasoner; yet he never will be looked upon by those whose senses are exercised to discern spiritual things, as a truly evangelical and christian orator.—And surely if a minister's heart is ever warm, it ought to be so in a more especial manner, when calling on a blind and drowsy world, to behold the Lamb of GOD. O! that my tongue was at this time touched with a coal from his altar. O! that my cold and frozen heart (for I must again repeat the wish I put up at the beginning of this discourse) was in the same blessed and divine frame, as we have reason to believe the holy Baptist was favoured with, when he called upon his disciples and the people, so repeatedly, to behold the Lamb of GOD. But to whom shall I apply myself first? Or with what language shall I address you, when pressing you to the same important

Will my brethren in the miniſtry ſuffer a word of exhortation from one who is leſs than the leaſt of them all? Does not the practice of this fervent harbinger and fore-runner of the Son of God, naturally lead me to it? For did he ſo unweariedly recommend the LORD JESUS? Did he take ſuch care to preach not himſelf, but CHRIST JESUS his Lord? And ſhall not we make this ſame JESUS the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of all our diſcourſes? Did he take ſuch pains to debaſe himſelf, exalt his LORD, and evidence to the world that he was diſintereſted, and ſought not his own glory, but the glory of him whoſe fore-runner he was? And ſhall we not go and do likewiſe? To prepare the Redeemer's way before him, by turning the hearts of the diſobedient to the wiſdom of the juſt, and to proclaim a coming Saviour, *John* eſteemed his higheſt honour. This is an employ worthy angels. They thought themſelves highly favoured, when ſent to give notice of the Mediator's birth to ſome humble ſhepherds. And I hope I am ſpeaking to ſome, who had rather be employed in ſuch an errand, than be ambaſſadors to the greateſt monarchs on earth. Go on then, my brethren, or rather fathers, as it becomes ſuch a one as I to call you. Ye angels of the churches, ye ſtewards of the myſteries of GOD, go on in the name and ſtrength of the everlaſting I AM. Preach CHRIST, and him crucified; continue to preach him: be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; and though you ſhould be called to ſuffer for ſo doing, fear not, but rather rejoice, and be exceeding glad: great will be your reward in heaven: for ſo perſecuted they *John* the Baptiſt, and others that have been employed in calling upon ſinners to behold the Lamb of GOD before you.

Are any here preſent who are entruſted with the care of youth that are intended for the miniſtry? My text warns me not to leave you out in this addreſs. *John* directed his diſciples

ples to behold the Lamb of GOD: and ought not such, who have the oversight of those who are hereafter to be employed in the same divine work as *John* was, to make it one main part of their daily endeavours, to bring their pupils to a true experimental, and saving acquaintance with the ever-blessed Lamb of GOD? This may be done without leaving the one necessary branch of true knowledge and useful learning undone. A neglect of this important point hath been, and is to be feared even now is, the bane of the christian church. For, if young men's minds are from year to year wholly engaged in studying the heathen mythology, instead of being shewn the beauties of the New Testament; if they are taught to delight more in reading *Cæsar*'s Commentaries, or the exploits of an *Alexander*, than to admire the miracles of *Jesus* of *Nazareth*; if they are directed to employ themselves more in giving an account of *Homer*'s battles, than of the important war between *Michael* and the Dragon; if it is esteemed a greater excellency to be engaged in studying the folds of a *Roman* garment, than to enquire into the various turnings and windings of their own corrupt hearts: if these, and such-like, trifling things, are recommended to their daily study, and the glorious doctrines of the gospel, such as regeneration, justification, &c. wholly neglected, or superficially spoken of, is it any wonder, that so many ignorantly strike their heads against the pulpit, or appear when put into it, more like heathen philosophers or *Roman* orators, than gospel preachers, though without half the clearness and sound reasoning of the one, or a thousandth part of the true pathos and unaffected eloquence of the other? The recommending and enforcing the practical study of the doctrines and example of the blessed JESUS, seems to me to be the only remedy for this great, not to say growing evil.

And therefore, I beg leave in the next place to address myself to those who are now actually engaged in the

ſtudy of divinity, and are deſirous of being prepared according to the preparation of the ſanctuary, for the great and ſolemn work of calling upon ſinners, to behold the Lamb of God. When *John* the Baptiſt was thus employed, he took care to aſſure the people, that he himſelf was well acquainted with that Christ. "I ſaw, ſaid he, and bear record, that this is the Son of God." And doth not this at leaſt intimate to you, young ſtudents, that above all things you ſhould ſtudy to get an experimental acquaintance with the Lamb Jesus in your own hearts, before you attempt to recommend him to the choice of others? Then, having believed, you will ſpeak; ſpeak not as mere dead, formal, letter-learned ſcribes, but as men having authority. You will then, like *John* the Baptiſt, be the voice of one crying; you will lift up your voices like trumpets; you will preach not with the enticing words of man's wiſdom, but with the demonſtration of the ſpirit and of power. This, with a moderate ſhare of uſeful learning, which is quite neceſſary in its place, will enable you to do wonders. Vallies ſhall be filled up, mountains ſhall be brought low, and a highway made, through your inſtrumentality, into ſinners hearts, by the bleſſed and all-powerful operations of the Spirit of the everliving God. Such a method, perhaps, may render your preaching a little unfaſhionable, but it is the only way to render it uſeful, and truly evangelical. Take the Apoſtle *Paul* for your enſample. He was a great ſcholar, as well as a great ſaint; and, if called to it, could have fought the learned world with their own weapons; but he choſe to fight only with the ſword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And even, when preaching at ſo polite a place as *Corinth*, determined to know nothing among them, but Jesus Christ and him crucified. He too, like another *John*, made it his conſtant, uninterrupted employ to beſeech poor ſinners to behold the Lamb of God. May that mind be in you, which was alſo in him!

But

But do not the words of our text lead me to addreſs all in general, as well as tutors and their pupils in particular? Yes: to you, even to as many as hear me this day, whether high or low, rich or poor, young or old, one with another, may a word of exhortation naturally be directed. It was to the people, as well as to his diſciples, that *John*, when he ſaw JESUS coming unto him, ſpoke thoſe endearing words, "Behold the Lamb of GOD." I therefore call upon you all in the ſame language, and for the ſame reaſon; for it is He, and He alone, that taketh away the ſins of the world. It is this that you all ſtand in need of, whether you know it or not. You are all ſtung by that old and crooked ſerpent the devil. "Therefore, as *Moſes* lifted up the ſerpent in the wilderneſs, even ſo was the Son of Man lifted up, that whoſoever believeth on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life." O then behold him, behold him! Look unto him, all ye ends of the earth, even ye upon whom the ends of the world are come, and be ye ſaved. Some of you, I truſt, through grace, have already been enabled to do this. O come, come, I beſeech you, and repeat the bleſſed look: for this is the chriſtian's grand catholicon, the ſovereign remedy for all the remaining diſeaſes of his ſoul. Are ye tempted? Behold the Lamb of GOD. "He was tempted in all things like as we are," that he might be able experimentally to ſympathize with, and ſuccour thoſe that are tempted. Are ye deſerted, and bewailing an abſent GOD? Behold the Lamb of GOD. He once complained, and that too to his own creatures, "My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death;" He once cried out, and that to his heavenly Father, "My GOD, my GOD, why haſt thou forſaken me." Are ye poor? Behold the Lamb of GOD: He had not where to lay his head. Are ye betrayed and forſaken by friends? Behold the Lamb of GOD: He was betrayed by *Judas*, denied by *Peter*, and when apprehended, all forſook him and fled. Are you

blackened

blackened and maligned by enemies? Behold the LAMB of GOD: He was accounted a mad-man, a deceiver, nay, a Beelzebub, the very chief of the devils. Are ye afraid of death, or dying? Behold the LAMB of GOD: He hath taken away the sting of that king of terrors, and came to deliver those, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. Doubt ye whether ye shall hold out to the end? Behold the LAMB of GOD; "He is the Author and finisher of our faith;" and having loved his own, he loved them even unto the end. Do ye want more grace, either to mortify remaining corruption, or to enable you to bring forth more fruit unto GOD? Behold the LAMB of GOD: "Out of his fulness we may all receive, and that too, even grace for grace;" grace upon grace, grace to beget more grace, even till we are filled with all the fulness of GOD. O ye believers, my heart is enlarged towards you; look to, and live much on the blessed JESUS; and then you will live to, and act for him more and more. Be thankful for what you have received, but be looking out continually for fresh discoveries of his love, and fresh incomes of heavenly grace, till you are called to behold this LAMB of GOD in glory: that time, blessed be GOD, will shortly come. Though worms destroy our bodies, yet in our flesh we shall see our GOD; not as we do now, through a glass darkly, but face to face: see him as he is: and what is yet better, be growing up more and more into his divine likeness, through the endless ages of eternity.

But as for ungodly and obstinate unbelievers that die in their sins, it shall not be so with them. Behold him indeed you shall; behold him you must; "For yet a little while, and we must all appear before the judgment-seat of CHRIST." But O! how shall I speak it? You must behold him once, never to behold him any more! Behold him, not so much as the LAMB of GOD, as the Lion of the tribe of *Judah*, and hear him roaring out that dreadful sentence, "Depart, ye cursed,

curſed, into everlaſting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." O think of this, all ye that have hitherto neglected to behold this LAMB of GOD by faith, ſo ſhall unbelief not prove your final ruin. To you, even to you I once more call. Bleſſed be GOD, the door of mercy is not yet ſhut; the day of grace is not yet over; look unto him, and you ſhall yet be ſaved: his heart is open, and his arms ſtretched out ready to receive you. O that he would rend the heavens and come down amongſt you; and as he had once compaſſion upon a poor woman, that was bowed down with the ſpirit of infirmity, lo eighteen years! O that he would repeat that all-powerful command, "Be ye looſed from your infirmity," and enable every unconverted ſinner to look up to, and behold the LAMB of GOD! However, if you will not come to him that you might have life, GOD forbid that I ſhould ceaſe to pray for you. O LORD GOD moſt holy, O LORD GOD moſt mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, thou moſt worthy Judge eternal, by thine agony and bloody ſweat, by thy croſs and paſſion, by thy precious death and burial, by thy glorious reſurrection and aſcenſion, and by the coming of the Holy Ghoſt, we humbly entreat thee to help all ſuch to take the warning that has now been given them! O help them to behold thee by faith here, that ſo no pains of hell may fall from thee whenever they are ſummoned to appear before thy awful tribunal hereafter! I am perſuaded all that love the LORD JESUS in ſincerity, will ſay, *Amen!* Even ſo, LORD JESUS! *Amen!* and *Amen!*

London, May 30, 1772.

THE Publiſhers of this Work hope the Subſcribers will excuſe the unavoidable Delay in the Publication of this the laſt Number, which it was not in their Power to prevent, as the Two Sermons therein contained, were not delivered to the Editor before laſt Week. They flatter themſelves, that the Excellency of theſe Sermons, will make ample Amends for its not appearing ſooner.

N. B. Sermon XXXI. on *Luke* x. 42, in Vol. V. having been printed in a former Edition of Mr. *Whitefield*'s Sermons, as his, was ſent to the Preſs with the others, but it now appears not to be Mr. *Whitefield*'s.

In the Preſs, and ſpeedily will be publiſhed,

MEMOIRS of the LIFE

OF THE

Rev^d. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, M. A.

Compiled from Original Papers and Letters.

Juſt finiſhed, a beautiful engraved Head of Mr. WHITEFIELD, eſteemed a ſtriking Likeneſs. Done by Mr. PICOT, from a Painting in the Poſſeſſion of the Earl of *Dartmouth*, and intended as a Frontiſpiece to the Life now printing.—A Few of the firſt Impreſſions are worked off upon fine Royal Paper, and may be had of Mr. *Picot*, Printſeller, in St. *Martin's-Lane*, and *E.* and *C. Dilly*, in the *Poultry*. Price Two Shillings.

NEW BOOKS Published this Day,

By EDWARD and CHARLES DILLY, in the Poultry, near the Manſion-Houſe, and ſold by all Bookſellers in Great-Britain and Ireland.

I. THE Œconomy of the Covenants between God and Man: Comprehending a Complete Body of Divinity. By Herman Witſius, D. D. Profeſſor of Divinity of the Univerſities of Leyden, &c. Faithfully tranſlated from the Latin, and carefully reviſed by William Crookſhank, D. D. In Three Volumes Octavo, Price bound 15s.

(Recommended by the Rev. Dr. John Gill, Dr. Walker, Dr. King, Mr. Hall, Mr. Brine, Dr. Gibbons, and by the late Rev. Mr. James Hervey, in his Theron and Aſpaſio, Vol. II. p. 366.)

Extract of a Letter from a Clergyman in the Country to the Publiſher.

——"The Sale of Witſius's Œconomy of the Covenants, "increaſes among my Friends. The Tranſlation is very "juſt; and the Excellency of the Work merits a Place in "every Chriſtian's Library. I ſhall do my utmoſt to recom- "mend it at all Times, and upon all proper Occaſions. No "pious Perſon on Earth can forbear reading this Book with- "out Wonder, Rapture, and Devotion: it exceeds all "Commendation. Hervey might well ſay, 'I would not "ſcruple to riſk all my Reputation upon the Merits of this "Performance.' For my own Part, I am not aſhamed nor "afraid of any Scorn and Ridicule that may be poured "on me from any Quarter, whilſt I conſtantly aver, that the "Work has not its equal in the World."

II. The Works of the Rev. Thomas Jones, M. A. late Chaplain of St. Saviour, Southwark: With a Short Account of his Life, in a Recommendatory Preface, by the Rev. William Romaine, M. A. The Second Edition, Price ſewed 4s. or bound in Calf 5s.

III. Evan-

NEW BOOKS Publiſhed this Day.

III. Evangelical Principles and Practice: Being Fourteen Sermons, preached in the Parish Church of St. Mary Magdalen, in Oxford. By the Rev. Thomas Haweis. The Third Edition. Price ſewed 4s. or bound in Calf 5s.

IV. The Communicant's Spiritual Companion; or, An Evangelical Preparation for the Lord's Supper; In which, 1. The Nature of the Ordinance is ſhewn. 2. The Way of approaching thereto deſcribed. 3. The dangerous Tendency of Weeks Preparation ſet forth. The careleſs Sinner is here admoniſhed; the Formaliſt detected and reproved; the Feeble-minded comforted; the Doubting relieved; the Sincere aſſiſted, and the Faithful confirmed. With Meditations and Helps ſuitable to the Subject. By the Rev. Thomas Haweis, late of Magdalen-Hall, Oxford, and Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Earl of Peterborow. The Fourth Edition, Price bound 1s. 6d.

V. The Duty of a real Chriſtian, both in Faith and Practice, upon Goſpel Principles; for promoting a Devout and Holy Life; in a new and eaſy Method, adapted to all Capacities. Neceſſary for all Families. Price bound 3s. A handſome Allowance will be made to thoſe who give them away.

VI. A Collection of Pſalm and Hymn Tunes, for the Uſe of the Lock-Hoſpital. In Two Parts. Price 2s. each.

VII. An Expoſition of the Old and New Teſtament: Wherein each Chapter is ſummed up to its Contents; the ſacred Text inſerted at large in diſtinct Paragraphs; each Paragraph reduced to its proper Heads; the Senſe given and largely illuſtrated. With practical Remarks and Obſervations. By Matthew Henry. The Fifth Edition. In Five large Volumes Folio. Price bound in Calf and lettered 7l.

VIII. A Practical Expoſition of the New Teſtament, in the Form of a Paraphraſe: With occaſional Notes in their proper Places, for further Explication; and ſerious Recollections at the Cloſe of every Chapter. For the Uſe of the Family and Cloſet. By John Guyſe, D. D. In Three Volumes Quarto. Price bound 2l. 10s.

IX. Comfort

NEW BOOKS Publiſhed this Day.

IX. Comfort for the Afflicted, under every Diſtreſs. With ſuitable Devotions, by the Rev. William Dodd, M. A. Prebendary of Brecon, and Chaplain to the Lord Biſhop of St. Davids. Neatly printed in One Volume Octavo, with a Frontiſpiece deſigned and finely engraved by Gwin. Price bound 5s.

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

This book is under no circumstances to be taken from the Building

form 419